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THE PROSPECTS OF PEACE.

NO event since the commencement of the war has excited so general a feeling of surprise as the announcement, on Thursday, that the Austrian terms were accepted by Russia. The different versions of the fact are perfectly reconcileable. There is no doubt that the acceptance has, in compliance with the Austrian demand, been unconditional; and it is also certain that the partial agreement thus established between the belligerents forms only a basis of negotiation. The activity of diplomatists will be once more called into requisition, on the one side to recommend, and on the other to limit, the demands which the Allies may feel bound to put forward. There is now, however, for the first time, a fair prospect of a satisfactory result. The Four Points were designedly, and perhaps not without solid reasons, framed in such a manner that Russia had neither a motive for refusing them, nor a fear of being bound by their terms. In renouncing her pretensions to preponderance in the Black Sea, she only abdicated a title or an abstraction. It might be argued that thirty ships of the line, with two or three impregnable arsenals, involved no necessary or demonstrable preponderance; and the special interpretation of the words evidently depended on the policy which might prevail at the time of the definite negotiation. The concurrence of all the Courts in the Four Points was, in truth, nothing more than an agreement that conferences should be held at Vienna. The plenipotentiaries proceeded smoothly as long as they confined themselves to questions on which there was little difference of opinion; but when they began to discuss the maritime supremacy of Russia, they found that they were beginning a premature negotiation instead of deducing practical consequences from a recognised principle. All the plans which were suggested might be considered more or less compatible with the basis fixed by the Cabinets; but between the offers of Russia and the demands of England was interposed the whole extent of the difference which it had been the purpose of the war to remove.

The experience of the past has not been lost on the statesmen who were parties to Count ESTERHAZY'S communication. The terms of peace recommended by Austria, although they may require development and application, are distinct and practical. It will, indeed, be possible for Russia to evade the consequences of her present admission by raising obstacles in detail; but every negotiation for peace involves the possible inconvenience of insincerity or caprice on the part of either belligerent. Peace, then, is by no means certain; but if it is obtained, we now know the principal conditions on which it must depend. The rectification of the Bessarabian frontier will offer some security to Turkey, and, at the same time, relieve the navigation of the Danube from the impediments to which it was formerly subjected. Austria, therefore, will probably undertake the details of a negotiation in which her own interests are so immediately involved; while it will be the more immediate object of England and France to take care that the concession which has been extorted by the superiority of their arms is not rendered nugatory by any offer of a trivial re-adjustment of frontier.

A far greater advance has been made in the agreement that the Black Sea shall only be opened to commercial flags. If Russian scruples are consulted by the provision that the maritime force to be retained shall be determined by a separate convention with Turkey, the Allies will take care that, instead of the fleet which formerly threatened Constantinople, there shall only remain a squadron of small cruisers, adapted to the purposes of police. Sebastopol, if it recovers its prosperity, will become a commercial port. Odessa will probably flourish under a policy far more favourable to the material interests of Russia than the policy of CATHERINE and of NICHOLAS. The neutralization offered in

the STACKELBERG scheme would have been consistent with the scheme devised by the Allies; but it would also have been compatible with the re-establishment of Sebastopol as a naval arsenal, and with the maintenance of a fleet not less powerful than that which has recently been sacrificed. A State may be neutral without suppression or even limitation of its armaments, or of those of its neighbours. By the public law of Europe, Switzerland and Belgium are acknowledged as neutral; but their security, as well as their pacific policy, depends only on a parchment guarantee. France, and Prussia, and Austria surround their frontiers with great armies; and the neutral States themselves possess large military establishments. Had the Russian offer been accepted, it might have been plausibly argued that the Government of St. Petersburg had fulfilled its engagement by obtaining the consent of Turkey to maintain ten ships of the line at Sebastopol, and by a promise to abstain from aggression, which would, of course, have been kept as long as peace continued. There is nothing invidious or ungenerous in pointing out the advantages which might be taken of vague and indefinite terms of agreement. No prudent man enters into an ambiguous bargain, however strongly he may confide in the good faith of the other party to the contract. States and individuals are supposed to negotiate with their eyes open; and if a discretion is left to either party, it is reasonable to assume that it will be used to its full extent. When rights and duties are defined in writing, there is no room left for supposed understandings or implied obligations—*Expressum facit cessare tacitum*. Russia will have the fullest right to perform every act which, being compatible with the law of nations, is not restrained by the language of the future treaty.

The result of the war will not have satisfied the more ambitious aspirations of those who expected that it would be prolonged over several campaigns. It would not have been worth while to incur sacrifices so heavy for objects less valuable than those which now seem likely to be attained; but the deliberate judgment of England would not have sanctioned the rejection of the terms to which Russia has assented. It is impossible to deny that some disappointment will be felt at the inutility of the vast preparations which had been made for a continuance of the struggle; but the energy and warlike spirit of the nation will not have failed to produce an influence on the opinion of the world. It can never again be thought that this country is incapable of persevering in a war which the judgment of the country approves. Notwithstanding losses, and imperfect successes, and absurd domestic calumny, England, at the commencement of the third year of the war, is only warming to the work. The tidings that peace was expected diffused a grave satisfaction among the thinking classes; but they have certainly failed to excite any feeling of popular exultation.

It is remarkable that Russian diplomacy, always dignified and plausible, should have exposed itself to the necessity of a sudden and unpalatable retraction. The counter-proposals which were forwarded to Vienna by Count STACKELBERG were ostentatiously described by the Russian organs in Brussels and in London as conciliatory in themselves, if not actually equivalent to the demands of the Allies. It was not until Count BUOL peremptorily rejected the Russian scheme that, on the eve of the term fixed for a final answer, the Cabinet of St. Petersburg finally determined to accept the Austrian basis of negotiation. It is probable that the resolution had been formed for some time, although it was considered expedient to defer as long as possible a resolution which implies an acknowledgment of defeat.

The chief danger of future misunderstanding may, perhaps, arise from the mismanagement of the Allied cause in Asia. Count ESTERHAZY left Vienna before the fall of Kars; and the Russian answer must refer only to

the demand made by Austria before that event was known. If the communications on both sides are literally interpreted, the enemy will, perhaps, claim either to retain his conquest, or to exchange it for some relaxation in the conditions to which he has already submitted. It is not indeed probable that the positions now held by the Allied armies in the Crimea will be surrendered as long as a Russian soldier remains on Turkish ground. The stronger party may reasonably abide by the terms which they have laid down as the minimum of concession which they will require. They have right and power on their side; but the adversary may, perhaps, involve them in some technical embarrassment when the interpretation of the accepted basis becomes complicated by the admixture of fresh considerations.

The reasons which have determined Russia to give way will perhaps never be fully known. Some approximation to the true state of circumstances would probably be furnished by reversing all Mr. COBDEN's prophecies and statistical assertions. It is assuredly not because the Russian Empire is invulnerable on its frontiers and inexhaustible in its resources, that its haughty Government has consented to interrupt a traditional policy, and to acknowledge that it has been worsted. The exhaustion of internal resources, the vast armaments of France and England, the growing estrangement of Austria, the unconcealed ill-will of Sweden—these and other dangers, present or prospective, might well influence statesmen whose patriotic feeling was never doubted, although their foreign policy has excited just indignation. It has not been found that resistance has, contrary to all previous experience, tended to encourage and prolong aggression.

The Allied Governments will enter into the negotiations which may ensue with good faith on their own part, and with a modified confidence in the sincerity of an adversary who has already made a sacrifice of self-love in subscribing the conditions of peace which were dictated by France and England. There will be but one opinion as to the necessity of continuing warlike preparations until peace is certain. Firmness and resolution to make no undue concession will probably bring the impending discussions to a successful issue. If the struggle closes with the present season, much will have been accomplished, though many sanguine hopes will have been disappointed. A great breach of public law will have received exemplary punishment—Russian aggrandizement will have, for the first time in the present century, received an effectual check. Finally, England will have learnt the defects which may have existed in her military and naval organization, and at the same time will have acquired a just confidence in the patriotism and warlike virtues which form the noblest distinction of a nation.

PRESIDENT PIERCE AND HIS MESSAGE.

THE Message of the President of the UNITED STATES is not penned with all the indecent ferocity lately attributed to it by the newspapers which advocate his policy, and the placemen who live by his patronage; but it adopts the ultra-popular view of all international questions to which the American Government is a party, and it maintains positions in which it will not be easy for Great Britain to acquiesce, and from which the very dogmatism of this document makes it difficult for the United States to recede. We are sensible of all the absurdity which attaches to the very notion of a serious quarrel between the two countries on the subject of the Mosquito Protectorate, and we are thoroughly rejoiced that President PIERCE thinks it "proper not to consider an amicable solution of the controversy hopeless." At the same time, we are convinced that it is neither safe nor politic to stimulate the acquisitiveness of the American people by a wholesale surrender of the points in question; and we are quite sure that imminent peril is in store for the Republic of nations, if the views of public law contended for by the Federation, and the principles of interpretation which it seeks to apply to international engagements, are permitted to be fortified by a hasty deference to the exigencies of the moment.

"By the Convention," writes the PRESIDENT, "concluded between England and the United States, on 19th of April, 1850, both parties covenant that *neither will ever occupy, fortify, colonize, or assume or exercise dominion over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito Coast, or any part of Central America.*" The English Government applies to this clause the ordinary principle that Treaties, unless they distinctly

modify the *status quo*, leave it altogether untouched; and insists that the engagement signed by its plenipotentiary does not in any way affect the rights which it enjoyed in Central America at the moment of signing. The United States, on the other hand, contend that we pledged ourselves to surrender all our existing Central American possessions, with the single exception of the qualified occupation necessary to the exercise of our privilege of felling dyewoods at the Belize. Which of these conflicting interpretations is the fairer, is a question upon which a citizen of either country can scarcely give an unprejudiced verdict; but an Englishman may realize the strength of his own position by imagining the words of the CLAYTON-BULWER Convention to be inserted to-morrow in a treaty between England and France, and then asking himself whether an engagement that "neither party will ever occupy, fortify, colonize, or assume or exercise dominion over any portion of the Continent of Europe" would bind Great Britain to give up Gibraltar to the Spaniards. The question as to the meaning of the clause does not, however, exhaust the controversy. The English Government advances two grounds of resistance to the American demand. It avers, first, that the phraseology of the Treaty does not carry the meaning attributed to it by the United States, and next, that, if the words do convey that sense, they are not conformable to the intention of one of the signatories. The notion that a written engagement is conclusively binding on both the parties who sign it, even though, before the ink is dry on it, its language can be shown to contradict the plain intention of one of them, could only occur to a person wholly ignorant of jurisprudence, or to an Anglo-Saxon common lawyer unfamiliar with the higher principles of equitable adjudication. President PIERCE has practised as an advocate in his own State; and if he knows anything about its Courts of Equity, he is aware that they are constantly remodelling or setting aside agreements which have been signed under the mistaken impression that their language corresponds with the common purpose of all who join in their execution. Now, whatever advantage the American negotiator may have proposed to himself to gain by acquiescing in the disputed clause, we take it to be absolutely incontestable that neither Sir HENRY BULWER nor his Government had the slightest intention of submitting themselves to the ruinous obligation which the American view seeks to impose on them. It is a flat absurdity to suppose that they could sign away possessions which have since been deemed large enough to be erected into a separate colony, by words which, if compared with their assumed purport, are so curiously ambiguous. No doubt, too, express testimony as to the purpose of the English Plenipotentiary could be provided in abundance. We cannot see how President PIERCE could refuse to attend to it. He himself admits that the Belize is not included in the possessions which Great Britain is bound to surrender. But why? The Belize is surely as much within the strict words of the clause as the Mosquito Protectorate or the Bay Colony. In fact, the President's admission is based upon correspondence which passed, during the negotiation, between Sir HENRY BULWER and Mr. CLAYTON; and, if reference be once made to any materials for judgment except the mere text of the Convention, it is difficult to say why all sources of evidence should not be resorted to.

But the CLAYTON-BULWER convention does not furnish President PIERCE with his only argument against Great Britain. It is idle, he urges, for us to insist that the Treaty had no effect on our rights in Central America, for, in point of fact, we had no rights anywhere, except at the Belize; and he says distinctly that, in contending for the prospective operation of the Convention of 1850, the English Government "substitutes a partial issue in place of the general one presented by the United States." Those who have traced the history of this obscure negotiation are aware that the reverse of what is here asserted would be nearer the truth. It was certainly the American Government which, by an after-thought, substituted a double issue for a single one. Conscious that the ground which it had taken up on the words of the Treaty was none of the strongest, it gradually edged away to the more promising position which it has now assumed; and at length, by the mouth of President PIERCE, it simultaneously asserts that we never had any footing at all in Central America, and that the intention of the American negotiators, in agreeing to the Convention of 1850, was to deprive us of our footing. The first branch of this proposition is as untenable in itself as it is

absurdly inconsistent with the second. All our possessions in Central America—the Bay Colony and the portions of Honduras and Nicaragua over which we exercise dominion—are doubtless offshoots from the settlement at the Belize; but, granting all for which the Americans contend, granting that these acquisitions of territory were mere usurpations, we have a retort which can only be conveyed in the rudest form of argumentative rebuff—What is that to you? All the appropriations of dominion complained of, if injuries at all, are injuries, not to the United States, but to Honduras, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua. The Anglo-Saxon Republic can, of course, if it pleases, adopt the quarrel of these little States, just as England and France have adopted the quarrel of Turkey; but, until it has done so, it is bound by every principle of international law to recognise the acquisitions we have made, though they should happen to be the fruit of naked usurpation. The truth is, however, that most of the territory we occupy in Central America has been peaceably held by us for more than fifty years; and therefore, even though we should admit that the rights of the Spanish crown had descended to those nests of North-American Filibusters which call themselves the Central American Republics, we should still hold our acquisitions by a title which the law of nations places on the same level with the sovereignty of their original possessors. We are sensible, indeed, that American statesmen have more than once overlooked the effects of Prescription in matters of this nature, and they seem even averse, as in the instance of the Sound Dues, to acknowledge it at all as a ground of national proprietorship. It would be a curious task for a skilful diplomatist to prove to them that several of the older States in the Federation hold a large part of their territory by a title which is prescriptive or nothing.

The dissertations on Slavery and the Constitution, which the PRESIDENT has appended to his Message, appear to be regarded in England as unmeaning, and in America as insulting. We imagine that they have failed of their object, through the delay which the proceedings of the House of Representatives have occasioned. At the beginning of December, the announcement of difficulties with Great Britain on the Central American and Enlistment questions, followed by an exhortation to maintain the *status quo* on the subject of Slavery, might well have succeeded in calling off attention from the domestic affairs of the United States, and in fastening it on their foreign relations. But the project miscarried through the enforced silence which the President has been obliged to observe for a month. While the interest of the people in the foreign difficulty has sensibly cooled, their zeal for a decision on the great issue of Free and Slave Soil has been extraordinarily stimulated by the protracted struggle in the Lower House. How little the PRESIDENT's appeal to the Northern States is now in harmony with the temper of the men whom those States have just sent to Congress, may be inferred from their positive refusal to allow his Message to be read before their differences as to the Speakership had been settled. Nor, when the terms of the address were actually known to them, can there be much doubt that they were listened to with impatience. President PIERCE has, in fact, been elaborately stating the injustice and the danger of a particular course to men who, before his lecture was read to them, had committed themselves to the very steps which he so energetically deprecated.

PEERAGES FOR LIFE.

THE patent by which the Barony of WENSLEYDALE is created introduces an important constitutional innovation which seems to have excited little notice. The new peerage is limited to Sir JAMES PARKE for the term of his *natural life*—in other words, the Crown has, with the assent of the LORD CHANCELLOR, decided a question long discussed among speculative politicians, by granting a non-hereditary peerage. Among the numerous oddities of our constitutional system, the distribution of powers among the various authorities of the State furnishes some of the most surprising anomalies. The whole Legislature must be set in motion before a Secretary-at-War can be exalted into a Secretary of State for the War Department; but an impress of the Great Seal, recorded in a paragraph of the *Gazette*, puts an end to the exclusively hereditary character which has for nearly four centuries belonged to the House of Lords.

It must be assumed that the change has been deliberately

considered by the Government. As no practical result will follow, in this particular instance, from the abandonment of the ordinary course, the limitation of the new peerage for life must have been devised for the purpose of creating a precedent. Lord WENSLEYDALE having no surviving male issue, his Barony would, in any case, have become extinct at his death; yet several peers ennobled within living memory have, under similar circumstances, received hereditary titles. Few persons, indeed, except lawyers or professed historical students, were even aware that the Crown possessed the prerogative of creating a peerage for life. The constitution of the House of Lords is one of those familiar subjects of which all Englishmen take, as it were, judicial notice, without reference to the researches of jurists and antiquarians; and in popular estimation, the distinguishing quality of the peerage consists in its transmissibility by descent. There are Scotch and Irish peers who are not Lords of Parliament, and Roman Catholic peers have, in former times, been debarred from the exercise of their privilege; but in every instance, the heirs of the original grantee, or of the remainder-man named in the patent, succeed to the honours of their ancestor.

Those who take an interest in the early history of the House of Lords may easily gratify their curiosity on the subject by consulting HALLAM and other constitutional historians. But even if precedents of life-peerages can be found in the times of the PLANTAGENETS, there is no innovation more complete than the revival of an obsolete practice. The principal Baronies of the kingdom were from the first essentially hereditary, inasmuch as the right and duty of sitting in Parliament was only an incident to the tenure of the great fiefs of the Crown, and the son necessarily succeeded to the privileges and liabilities which attached to his father's lands. The writ of summons, however, seldom contained words of inheritance; and, according to HALLAM, "ninety-eight laymen were summoned only once to Parliament, none of their names occurring afterwards; and fifty others, two, three, or four times. Some were constantly summoned during their lives, none of whose posterity attained that honour." It is considered probable that these occasional members of the Upper House were bannerets, or minor barons; nor is it absolutely certain that they enjoyed an equal right of suffrage with the hereditary peers. Before the accession of the House of TUDOR, the custom of issuing occasional writs of summons had fallen into desuetude; and since that time, the Crown has never influenced the constitution of the House of Lords except by ennobling an entire family. A still narrower discretion has been exercised with respect to the lords spiritual; for, when a new bishopric was created a few years since, it was provided by Act of Parliament that the junior bishop for the time being should possess no vote in the House. It was never supposed that the Crown could exercise any choice either in issuing or in withholding the writ of summons; and the prerogative of conferring on a borough the right of sending members to Parliament has probably been exercised more recently than the power of creating a peerage for a limited period. Ministers would, perhaps, have shown no excess of constitutional scruple if they had introduced at least a declaratory Act of Parliament to sanction the innovation which they thought desirable; but there is reason to doubt whether such a measure would have passed the House of Lords, even if it had received the approval of the Commons.

There is room for much variety of opinion as to the expediency of the change. It has often been felt as a practical inconvenience that there should be no alternative between the exclusion from the House of Lords of eminent soldiers, statesmen, or lawyers, and the creation of titles and privileges for their remote posterity. There have been many cases in which a modern peerage has been inadequately endowed by the founder of the family, and in some instances public men have refused to accept a distinction which might prove to be an incumbrance on their descendants. Mr. MACAULAY relates, for example, that, in King WILLIAM's time, the wealthy Earl of BEDFORD often declined a dukedom, from a fear that the younger branches of his house would be excluded by titular rank from lucrative professions and occupations. It may be added that the decisions of the Peers might possibly obtain more general respect if their benches were filled with a larger proportion of veteran statesmen, and at the same time relieved from some obscure descendants of those who won peerages in former generations. The anomaly of a pauper peer

always creates a sense of discrepancy, and a disreputable peer affords the most attractive food for scandal. Finally, the great majority of the House of Lords can make no pretence to personal eminence or distinction. As it would be absurd to attribute to Ministers the levity of introducing a constitutional change in deference to the feelings of an individual, it must be assumed that they have been influenced by considerations of political expediency, and that it is their purpose, on future occasions, to follow up the precedent which they have established.

There is, however, much to be said in favour of the hereditary system. The influence of the House of Lords is derived partly from the ability and experience of its more active members; but there can be no doubt that very much of its weight is due to the permanence of its elements. Noble families are so prudent or fortunate, especially in their matrimonial alliances, that the danger of an impoverished peerage has proved wholly imaginary; and the degradation by Act of Parliament of NEVIL, Duke of BEDFORD, on account of the insufficiency of his estate, has remained for several centuries a solitary and inoperative precedent. It is easy to reckon up a dozen peers in narrow circumstances; but the House of Lords is still incomparably the wealthiest body in England, and therefore in the world. In a country which is said to deem poverty odious, great possessions are necessarily respectable; and it cannot be denied that wealth acquires an additional value in popular estimation where it has long been attached to the same family. The French Senate, which is supposed to include only the most eminent personages in the Empire, corresponds more nearly to the theoretical conception of an Upper House; but either the first NAPOLEON or his heir would have given much to secure to the so-called Conservative Senate that stability and inherent power of conservation which are found in the English House of Lords. It is the business of constituent legislation to arrange society in its natural order; and the question is, whether deference is more readily paid to personal claims or to hereditary rank. In France, the answer could not be doubtful; but in England, it will probably be found that, notwithstanding much antagonism of feeling and opinion, aristocratic sympathies are still in the ascendant, and so long as the ordinary members of the House of Lords judiciously efface themselves in the actual business of Parliament, popular jealousy will be checked by respect for the statesmen who act as their leaders. The *senatores pedarii*—each in his own neighbourhood a centre of local influence—add, in their collective capacity, considerable weight to the movement which their chiefs think fit to inaugurate.

In former times, any attempt on the part of a Minister to tamper with the distinctive character of the peerage would have excited universal suspicion. In theory, the Crown has always had the power to swamp the House of Lords by a new creation, but on only two occasions has this formidable prerogative seriously menaced the independence which it has never actually assailed. The intended nomination of twelve new peers in 1711 furnished a pretext for the Bill by which, in the following reign, it was proposed to deprive the Crown in future of the power of increasing the numbers of the Upper House. In the more formidable crisis of 1832, WILLIAM IV. unwillingly promised Lord GREY that he would furnish him with the means of carrying the Reform Bill through the Lords. The interference of the KING himself, with the consequent secession of the Duke of WELLINGTON and his followers, is supposed alone to have averted the danger; but even the Minister who demanded so extraordinary a power was most reluctant to use it, in the event of its being found possible to effect his object by milder methods.

Lord GREY's scruples would, however, have been effectually removed, if he had thought himself at liberty to create life-peerages. There is no difficulty in packing an assembly of nominees; but no statesman would willingly convert a hundred partisans into founders of long lines of legislators. New peers have hitherto usually had either fame or fortune to transmit to their descendants, but a life-peer would be appointed with less inquiry into his qualifications. The experiment is naturally tried in the case of an individual to whom no reasonable objection can be raised. Lord WENSDALE has fully earned the honours which he has achieved; nor is there any reason to suppose that he will be a blind supporter of the Government. The introduction, however, of a new form of patent really alters the character of the House of Lords, and seriously affects its relation to

the Crown. It may be that the time has come for a change which has often been desired and foretold; but it is not desirable that a constitutional innovation should be passed over without remark, and the Ministerial act will become a legitimate precedent if it fails to excite the notice of Parliament during the ensuing session.

THE DIPLOMATIC HISTORY OF THE EASTERN QUESTION.

AT the present crisis, when it appears probable that formal negotiations may shortly commence, it may be convenient to take a retrospective view of the diplomatic side of the contest with Russia. Ever since the Turkish declaration of war in 1853, ambassadors and plenipotentiaries have been, with few and brief intervals, as actively at work as the generals of the opposing armies. Shortly after the passage of the Pruth by the Russian forces, in June, 1853, conferences of the Four Powers—England, France, Austria, and Prussia—were opened at Vienna. Their first result was the celebrated Note, drawn by the French Minister, revised by the representatives of Europe assembled in the Austrian capital, and unreservedly accepted by Russia. The hope of a settlement on this basis was rather curiously balked. Turkey suggested modifications, for the purpose of stating, in a more explicit form, the principles which the Conference had intended to lay down; and the Four Powers approved of the alterations made by the Porte, as giving greater precision to the document without varying its substantial effect. The Court of St. Petersburg, however, refused to admit them, and declared that, in accepting the original Note, it had read it in a sense opposed to the views of Turkey. It was then agreed by the States in conference at Vienna, that the meaning intended to be conveyed by the rather ambiguous language they had used was that adopted by the Porte and rejected by the CZAR; and they accordingly refused to act upon the delusive acceptance of its terms which Russia had offered. The Ottoman declaration of war followed immediately upon the rupture of this first negotiation; and when the Olmütz Conferences with Austria had terminated without leading to any result, the CZAR accepted the challenge of the SULTAN by the proclamation of the 1st of November, in which he declared that he took up arms to compel Turkey to respect her treaty obligations.

The commencement of actual hostilities did not stop the diplomatic activity of the Four Powers. By a joint protocol of the 5th of December—chiefly remarkable for the declaration, made in the interests of the Porte, that the war between Russia and Turkey could not in any case alter the territorial limits of the two empires—the bases of negotiation were indicated, and a collective note was at the same time addressed to Turkey, requesting her to state the terms on which she was prepared to treat. Notwithstanding the exasperation caused by the destruction of the Ottoman fleet at Sinope, the SULTAN's Government acceded to the proposal, and on the 13th of January, 1854, a protocol was drawn up at Vienna, and forwarded to St. Petersburg. This invitation to Russia to enter upon negotiations only elicited a counter-proposal, which was at once rejected by the Conference.

By this time, the intention of the Western Powers to occupy the Black Sea had been intimated to Russia by the British Minister, and shortly afterwards by an autograph communication from Napoleon III. The CZAR thereupon withdrew his ambassadors from London and Paris, and rejected the ultimatum of France and England, which insisted on an immediate evacuation of the Principalities. On the 27th and 28th of March, 1854, the long-expected declarations of war by the Emperor NAPOLEON and Queen VICTORIA were published; and on the 10th of April, an offensive and defensive treaty of alliance was ratified between France and England, by which they pledged themselves to take measures for liberating the SULTAN's dominions from foreign invasion, and not to seek any territorial aggrandizement for themselves. This treaty was declared open to other European Powers, and it subsequently received the adhesion of Sardinia.

Austria and Prussia, though they declined to join in hostilities, continued their conferences with the Western Powers at Vienna; and on the 9th of April, a protocol was executed, in which the Four Powers agreed to remain united for the purpose of maintaining the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and securing the independence and sovereignty of the SULTAN, as well as the religious liberties of his Christian subjects.

They further bound themselves not to make any definitive arrangement with Russia without previous deliberation in common. On the 20th of the same month, a treaty was executed between Austria and Prussia, to the effect that they should mutually guarantee their respective territories against attack, that they should unite in protecting the interests of Germany, that they should hold their forces in readiness for war, and that the Germanic Confederation should be invited to adhere to their policy. This instrument is noticeable as being the first diplomatic document in which the interests of Germany were recognised as distinct from the general interests of Europe. But its most important clause was a secret article, by which the contracting Powers agreed that Austria should summon Russia to give a guarantee for the early evacuation of the Principalities—that Prussia should energetically back the summons—that, in the event of a refusal, the defensive clauses of the treaty should be operative—but that offensive action was only to be taken in the event of Russia proceeding to incorporate the Provinces she had invaded, or to attack or pass the Balkan. The Austrian summons was accordingly sent, and, after a considerable interval—marked by Turkish successes on the Danube, by the appearance of the French and English armies at Varna, by the raising of the siege of Silistria, and the retreat of the Russian general—the CZAR so far assented to the demand as to promise, in general terms, to respect the integrity of Turkey, to evacuate the Principalities, and to deliberate on the consolidation of the rights of the Christian subjects of Turkey. With this reply Prussia declared herself satisfied; and she declined to attend a Conference convened by the Court of Vienna in July, for the joint consideration of the Russian answer. This was the occasion of her secession from the councils of Europe, from which she has ever since been excluded. Russia being now in full retreat from the Principalities, a convention was executed on the 14th June between Austria and Turkey, by which the EMPEROR pledged himself to use all requisite means to obtain the evacuation of those provinces, while the SULTAN agreed to hand them over to the occupation of an Austrian army until the conclusion of peace, with the express stipulation that their old administrative régime was to be restored, but so as not to control the action of the Imperial army.

About the time of the Russian reply to the summons of Austria and Prussia, the celebrated Four Points were first shadowed forth in a despatch of Lord CLARENDON to our Ambassador at Vienna, in which it was also intimated that Austria and Prussia would doubtless consider that the time had arrived for the fulfilment of the obligations of the treaty of the 20th of April. Prussia, however, as already stated, declined to go further with the other Powers; and on the 8th of August, England, France, and Austria exchanged notes, in which the bases of negotiation were settled pretty nearly in the form in which they were afterwards discussed in the Conferences of the following spring. On the ensuing 2nd of December, Austria entered into a treaty with the Western Powers founded on the protocol of the 9th of April, and the notes of the 8th of August. That treaty provided for an offensive and defensive alliance, in the event of a war between Austria and Russia, and it contained a stipulation that, unless peace should be assured on the bases referred to, Austria, France, and England "would deliberate without delay upon effectual means for obtaining the object of their alliance." The treaty was quickly followed by the memorandum of the 28th of December, in which the Four Points were categorically stated, and proposed for the acceptance of Russia. The First insisted on the abolition of the Protectorate claimed by Russia over Wallachia and Moldavia, and the Second stipulated for the freedom of the navigation of the Danube. The Third demanded the revision of the treaty of July 13, 1841 (the Convention of the Straits), in such a sense as to connect the Ottoman Empire more completely with the European equilibrium, and to put an end to Russian preponderance in the Black Sea; and the last related to the Christian population of Turkey. After much delay and apparent hesitation, Russia accepted the proposed bases, and the plenipotentiaries of Austria and the belligerent Powers met in conference at Vienna on the 15th March, 1855—Prussia being refused admittance to the Congress, except upon the terms of acceding to the treaty of the 2nd of December, to which she refused to become a party.

The Conferences opened with an ominous declaration of Prince GORTSCHAKOFF, that Russia would consent to no

terms which were not compatible with her honour; and Lord JOHN RUSSELL astonished his colleagues by the admission that the honour of Russia and the security of Europe were equally to be regarded in the conditions of peace. The details of the First Point were to a great extent arranged at the first three meetings of the Congress. It was decided that the Danubian provinces were to retain their ancient privileges—that they were to be free from foreign intervention, except with the concurrence of all the contracting Powers—and that they should organize a system of defence, the details of which were left to be afterwards considered in the common interests of the Porte, of Europe, and of the Principalities themselves. Three more meetings disposed of the Second Point. The Danube was to be placed under the jurisdiction of a European Commission, with power to report on any obstacles to its navigation to the river-bordering Powers, who were to retain the right of control given them by the old treaties of 1815. Russia refused, however, to place any of her territory at the Delta in the hands of the Commission, though she agreed to withdraw her quarantine establishments, and to maintain no fortress below the junction of the St. George and Sulina mouths.

These matters being disposed of, the Third Point came under discussion. Some weeks were allowed to Russia to determine whether she would make the first proposal; but at the conference of the 17th of April, she declined to take the initiative. In reply to M. DROUYN DE LHUYS, Prince GORTSCHAKOFF expressly stated that no limitation of the Black Sea fleet would be consented to; and the Austrian Minister, though recommending that solution of the dispute, declined to pledge his Government to coercive measures in support of it. The limitation scheme being thus summarily rejected, the CZAR's plenipotentiary put in a proposal, in which it was ingeniously argued that Turkey was as much endangered by the French and English as by the Russian fleets, and that the true solution was to be found in opening the Straits, which the Porte had hitherto jealously closed against all foreign ships of war. This project for reducing the preponderance of Russia by opening to her a passage to the Mediterranean was at once rejected, and the formal Conferences were brought to an end. An alternative solution was afterwards presented by Prince GORTSCHAKOFF, the substance of which was to leave the Straits closed to ships of war, as provided by the convention of 1841, but to give the SULTAN the express privilege of opening them to friendly navies, whenever he might consider his security menaced. It was doubtful, however, whether the privilege so offered to Turkey had been taken from her by the convention of 1841; and the Russian representative had himself stated, in the course of the Conferences, that the SULTAN was, under existing treaties, at liberty to open or close the Straits at pleasure. The proposal was accordingly condemned, as amounting in effect to the *status quo ante bellum*; and the Conferences closed with the definitive rejection by Russia of the limitation principle, and the refusal of the Allies to entertain the counter propositions offered in lieu of it.

Austria, however, still professed to see, not indeed a solution or the basis of one, but elements which might lead to an accommodation, and suggested an arrangement founded on the notion of a regulated counterpoise of force in the Black Sea, by which any augmentation in the maritime force of Russia in the Euxine was to be met by a proportionate increase of French and English ships admitted within the Straits. This proposition, after converting both the French and English representatives, and dividing Lord PALMERSTON's Cabinet, was ultimately rejected as unsatisfactory to the Western Powers, before it had been formally proposed for the acceptance of Russia. Austria soon afterwards declared that the contingency contemplated by the treaty of the 2nd of December had not, in her opinion, arisen; and since that period, her attempts to find a point from which to renew negotiations have been unremitting, although the result of the Vienna Congress showed that diplomacy was vain until some change should have occurred in the military position of the hostile Powers.

The capture of Sebastopol supplied the Court of Vienna with the basis of a new discussion. The Four Points were remodelled and amplified. The entire civil and military independence of the Principalities was now demanded; and the freedom of the Danube was to be secured by the cession of a portion of Bessarabia. The Black Sea was to be open

to merchant-ships alone, and no naval or military arsenals were to be maintained on its shores. The immunities of the Christian subjects of the Porte were to be preserved without infringement on the SULTAN's sovereignty, and, upon peace being made, Russia was to be invited to join in the deliberations upon this subject. Finally, the belligerent Powers were to have the right to add special conditions, of which it was well understood that the non-restoration of the fortifications of Bomarsund would be one. These Five Points are obviously much more stringent than the famous Four, especially on the two subjects of German interest—the Principalities and the Danube. They were approved by the Allies, and transmitted by Austria to St. Petersburg, with the intimation that nothing short of an unqualified adhesion would be listened to. After some delay, Russia replied by a counter-proposition, in which she rejected the required cession of Bessarabia, and offered Kars as the equivalent of Sebastopol and the other conquests of the Western Powers. She refused the fifth condition, and proposed modifications of the clauses to which she ostensibly acceded. This counter-proposition was at once rejected by Austria and the Allies, and it was intimated that on the 18th instant—the date of the expiration of the period originally fixed for the CZAR's consideration of the proposed terms—the Austrian Embassy would quit St. Petersburg, unless the conditions of the Allies should, in the interval, be unreservedly accepted. A rupture between the two Courts appeared imminent, when it was suddenly announced that Russia had withdrawn her opposition, and given an unconditional assent to the proposals of the Three Powers. We may therefore anticipate that negotiations will shortly be formally reopened, and we can only hope that they will lead to the definitive establishment of a solid, honourable, and enduring peace.

SELF-GOVERNMENT.

SELF-GOVERNMENT, like community of goods, is a beautiful idea—beautiful, that is, on paper. Whether, in practice, it be possible, or, if possible, whether it would be safer than CABET's Icarian Paradise, admits of some question. Nevertheless, it is a beautiful idea—so fair, that men whom no other beauty in heaven or earth can awaken to enthusiasm are awakened by it to love, and to labour, and to do valiant battle in its defence—so fair, that not a few country squires and jog-trot farmers who do not even know what an "idea" means, and who would probably receive the word with a suspicious shake of the head, as something "French" and "revolutionary," still are, in this one respect, "men who have an idea," though unconsciously to themselves.

No doubt, it is a noble idea, that a man, a parish, or a nation, should be self-contained, independent, self-governed. But in practice, a man has no right to say that he governs himself, on any system of metaphysics allowed among thinkers, any more than on his own experience. All he finds is, that certain parts and faculties of him govern the rest, and, in so doing, have to fight a perpetual battle, not without daily defeat and disgrace. Those who have spoken most wisely on man's duty of self-government, whether PLATO, the Stoics, or St. PAUL, have given no more complete idea of it than that of a conquest of "the flesh by the spirit"—of the appetites, sentiments, and opinions by the reason. They have always, moreover, described such a conquest as impossible without the inspiration of some higher and external power—in short, of an aristocracy, or government by the best, which in practice must depend on whether the best happen also to be the strongest. And that the same is the case with a nation, what educated man does not know? What attempt at complete Self-government ("democracy" as it is now inaccurately called) has not brought out all the more strongly the necessity of some central authority—an authority which needs to be the more despotic the more complete the freedom of the many. What self-governed community has not required, in order to prevent the evils of a mere "ochlocracy," or government by the changeful passions of the mob, some "Dictator," "Committee of Public Safety," or, as in a neighbouring nation, an autocrat pure and simple? It were well if our modern ultra-liberals, who mistake for true democracy mere "arithmocracy," or government by the majority, would recollect that MILTON himself, whom they admire as the great apostle of their dogma, makes no scruple of again and again asserting the ultimate right of the minority, however small, to coerce the

majority, as often as they are assured that they are in the right and the majority in the wrong; nor does he hesitate to find, in CROMWELL's despotism, a deliverance from the anarchy and selfishness of the "multitude," to whom he can use as hard epithets as any old cavalier.

And if it be thus with the individual and the nation, why not with the smaller corporations which lie between the nation and the individual in the scale of society? Why should it not be so in a parish? Or rather, why should we not confess that it is so in theory, when we see it to be so in fact? A parish is no more self-governed than a man or a nation. It is governed, and always will be, by the two or three most active men in it, who are for that very reason the most interested in keeping up the false watchword of "Self-government," because, by so doing, they keep the government of the parish in their own hands, and flatter the pride and passion of the majority till it becomes their easy tool. Let us look first at the case of an average country parish—a town parish will furnish matter enough for separate consideration. Let us suppose an average country parish, with (what it has not always) a resident squire, eight or ten farmers, and some thirty or forty rate-payers beside. In theory and law, the majority of the rate-payers choose their guardians and overseers of the poor. In practice and fact, who chooses them? Go to the vestry and see. There sit in conclave four worthies, with, possibly, the rector (if there be one) in the chair. There are Farmer SMITH, the last year's Guardian; Farmer BROWN, the last year's Overseer; Farmer JONES, the last year's parish Churchwarden; and Farmer ROBINSON, the last year's Surveyor of the Highways. Where are the other farmers? Minding their bullocks. They are brothers, or brothers-in-law, or uncles, or cousins of SMITH and his colleagues; and they are farmers likewise, and can trust SMITH and his peers to take care of the parish, and of them. Where are the rate-payers? In the fields at work. The vestry is called for eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and they are not going to lose half-a-day's work by attending it. Besides, if they came, they would be much too wise to lose their work by voting against their own employers, especially on matters of which they understand nothing whatever. So there the four worthies sit, and play at a sort of official game of puss-in-the-corner. BROWN becomes Surveyor, *vice* ROBINSON, who is made Churchwarden; JONES becomes Overseer, *vice* BROWN, who takes the post of Surveyor; while SMITH remains Guardian, as before. For the Guardian's post is the most important, and it is not every man who can fill it, or who chooses to fill it. In the first place, it is an invidious office. A Guardian must be ready to be hated by the poor—sometimes deservedly, sometimes undeservedly—if he does for them no more than he is absolutely compelled to do. Nay, he must be prepared to be hated by them for acts for which not he, but the whole Board of Guardians for the Union is responsible, and in which he himself has been out-voted; and it is not every man who can bear continual suspicion, grumbling, complaints, and "hot water" of every kind, especially if he does not deserve them. On the other hand, if he tries to do for the poor the utmost which the law allows him, he is certain to find himself in still hotter water with his fellow farmers and guardians—men of his own class, whose enmity is, of course, more disagreeable to him than that of the poor—and to be grumbled at as a man who "won't keep the rates down." So that, in practice, the one qualification for a Poor-law Guardian has come to be (over and above a certain amount of business habits) the will and the art to "keep the rates down;" and liberal and high-spirited men—as all know who have had much practical acquaintance with the working of the Poor-law—dislike and decline the office. Unable to battle against the meanness, stupidity, and bad temper of a majority of the Board—who are probably talking all at once on seven different matters, not one of them relevant to the question in hand—they find that they can employ their time better in cultivating their own land; and so they too often leave the office of Guardian to the meanest-spirited farmer in the parish, who combines with that meanness a spice of personal courage or moral effrontery. And thus "Parochial Self-government" is, in fact, a government by two or three of by no means the best, most generous, or most wise parishioners.

"Alas! then," cries the reader, "for the parish! How miserable and neglected the poor must be! How ill-administered the Poor-law!" Not in the least. There will be, here and there, cases of great hardship, as there would be

under any system which should not, like the old Poor-law, actually set a premium on improvidence and profligacy, and profess—which no Poor-law ought to do—to remove the disease of pauperism, instead of simply palliating its symptoms. But on the whole, the poor of the parish will be well cared for, relieved in sickness—often far more bountifully than those who are not paupers—and supported in old age. And why? How does a law work so well which is administered by Mr. SMITH and his peers, men who probably have as few motives, save that of self-interest, to stir them up, as any men on earth? Because there sit three gentlemen in Somerset House, who, to their honour be it said, do their work more faithfully, fairly, and industriously than perhaps any other official body in England, and who, on due complaint, will command Mr. SMITH to do his duty, if he neglects it, within four-and-twenty hours, and, if he refuses, will send down an official of their own to do it for him. And so the dead sham of parochial Self-government works on harmlessly enough, because there stands over it, rod in hand, the live fact of a very powerful and disinterested despotism.

But what has all this to do with Sanitary Reform? Simply this—that the authority for the removal of nuisances and all other matters prejudicial to the health of the parish is practically vested, by the 18 and 19 of Victoria, in our friends, SMITH the Guardian, BROWN the Surveyor, and JONES the Overseer; but that, unfortunately for the parish, they have not the least intention of exercising that authority. In the first place, they don't believe a word of these new-fangled "Doctors' notions." They hold the Board of Health to be the abomination of desolation itself, only less inimical to the first principle of English liberty, viz., Self-government, than the Pope and the Jesuits. In the next place, whatever improvements are made must of course be paid for, and the expenses not recovered must be met out of the rates; whilst their business is to keep the rates down, not to increase them. The expenses, on the other hand, which can be recovered, would have to be recovered from themselves, or from their own brothers, uncles, cousins, pot-companions, with whom they discuss prices at the ordinary every market day, and read *Bell's Life* at the public house every Sunday evening; for half the cottages in the parish, and those the most wretched and dilapidated half, have been let to the farmers with their farms—shame that it should be so! But shall a man turn on his own flesh and blood? Do we expect to find three or four BRUTUSES in every village, who will execute justice on their own sons, *more majorum*? Besides, SMITH and his peers have an excuse in justice on their side. They have, most probably, no leases. They hold their farms on rack-rent, or on two years' agreements, and the cottages were already unfit for human habitation when they "took to" them. Is it fair, then, to ask them to remove evils which they did not produce, and to expend capital on cottages which may be taken out of their hands at six months' notice? Certainly not. Neither is it fair on them to ask them to exercise their authority for the removal of nuisances belonging to the other cottages, which are still in the squire's hands, and pay rent directly to the landlord. If they charge to him the costs of making those cottages fit for human beings to dwell in, he will turn them out of their farms. They know that; and he knows that they know it; and therefore the Act remains a dead letter, save in the case of some poor fellow who is a freeholder or copyholder of a cottage with an acre or two of land. On him and his nuisances the Act is brought to bear valiantly and sternly enough. And why? Because he is no man's brother, or cousin, or tenant; and his bit of freehold is a Naboth's vineyard, which every farmer who has a little ready money—and the squire also, though he may have no ready money—will be glad to buy for himself, and meanwhile, will make as expensive and disagreeable as possible to the owner, lest, becoming too fond of it, he should be unwilling to sell when they are ready to buy.

But cannot the Poor-Law Board compel Guardian SMITH to do his duty? Not in the least. It can compel him to feed and comfort the poor at a great expense, after they have caught the fever; but it cannot compel him to remove, at a much less expense, the nuisances which have produced that fever. It may cure, but it must not prevent. That would be to interfere with the sacred idea of "Self-government"—in plain English, with the *government of the poor by their employers*. One would have fancied it simple and rational enough to have given the Poor-Law Board the same

ultimate power of coercion in sanitary cases which it has now in cases of medical relief—at least in country parishes—and to have vested local sanitary powers, not in the guardians of individual parishes, some 16000 in number, but in the boards of each Union, some 600 in number, thus making use of an organization already existing, and enabling a central authority to act upon a number of bodies not too numerous for practical supervision. There may be objections to such a plan, but the only one which at present occurs to us is, that the Poor-Law Commissioners have done so much good with the power already in their hands that any further means of doing good might be a moral snare to them, and might tempt them to forget the due cultivation of Christian humility.

MEDEA IN LONDON.

TWO cases of infanticide, tried at the Old Bailey Sessions on last Wednesday week, give rise to some disagreeable reflections. The parallel which they present is so close that they may be considered typical. They exhibit precisely the same features, and they were disposed of in the same morning, with exactly the same results. A mother of illegitimate children at Hoxton murdered two of her infants by cutting their throats—a married woman at Chelsea flung her two children into the Thames. The unmarried MEDEA, like the Colchian princess—so at least it was at first said—slaughtered her offspring because her paramour contemplated a more legitimate alliance; while the married woman plunged her helpless children into the river because she fancied that they were affected with a congenital disease which would only entail on them a life of suffering and disease. She preferred their immediate death to their lingering pains. In either case, relatives were found to depose that the accused came of a tainted stock. Madness was traced in the family; and without a struggle against the force or relevancy of this single fact, the women were both acquitted on the ground of insanity.

In the present state of the law, we are not going to question these verdicts. We take up the subject on more general grounds. And first, we must say that this doctrine of hereditary madness opens a wide door to immunity from responsibility. How few are the families in which such a taint cannot, at one time or other, be detected! A woman has a temporary access of delirium after her confinement—does she thenceforth cease to be responsible? Is madness itself an affection always beyond control? What is meant by the test, which is in these and similar cases so summarily appealed to, and so systematically admitted, that, at the moment of crime, the murderer is unable to distinguish between right and wrong? Is not the real fact rather that, in the paroxysm of passion, the criminal is unable to resist the temptation of sin? And why unable? Does not the struggle very often prove the capacity to resist?

It must be observed that the characteristic of these cases is, that they are instances of so-called monomania. No evidence was produced that, in any other relation of life, the mind of either of these women was unHINGED. Each of them, after deliberation and choice, preferred the death of her children—the one to their sickly, the other to their dishonoured, life. The impulse had long existed. The victims died under no sudden access of fury—their fate was the practical conclusion to a moral argument. In other words, these infanticides are instances of moral insanity. They are not simply the result of an illusion—they are logical deductions from a false ethical principle. There is obviously great danger in admitting this doctrine of moral insanity, especially when it is a great and unnatural crime which proves the disease. The criminal must be conscious of the difference between right and wrong, if he argues that it is a less wrong to put an end to a suffering and precarious life than to commit its issues to Divine Providence. All that the monomania, if such it is, consists in, is that the person labouring under it considers that death is preferable to an unhappy existence.

Such is the particular form of monomania displayed in the cases before us. It may be added, that monomania itself is a dangerous term—so dangerous that, in the hands of those slippery moralists, the medico-legalists, the term simply exhausts, by successive stages, the possibility of moral responsibility. We now hear of *kleptomania* and *dipsomania* as recognised pleas, which release the agent from responsibility under these particular provinces of morals. Prove that a

person is under the uncontrollable, or rather uncontrolled, passion of drinking or thieving, and the classical writers, such as MARC, and, we believe, ESQUIROL, allow the excuse. It needs but a single step to parcel out the whole domain of moral action into separate regions of irresponsibility. Why not *phonomania* and *pornomania*? Once admit these additions to the medico-legal vocabulary, and violations—that is, criminal violations—of the Seventh and Eighth Commandments become impossible.

Next comes in the consideration, how far crimes of this class result from morbid imitation, and how far this imitation discharges responsibility. We all remember that it was a fashion, a few years ago, for people to throw themselves from the Monument; and history has recorded the prevalence of the poisoning mania throughout Europe. The publicity given to cases at present harrowing the public mind is likely enough to revive it—especially as they reveal the fearful facilities for the crime. It is a curious fact that, in the very neighbourhood where one of these recent acts of infanticide occurred, at Hoxton, about ten years ago, a man named GILES cut the throats of two of his children under circumstances closely resembling those of the murder committed by the woman M'NEILL. We fear that, looking at the comparative immunity which has attended these two cases, we have not heard the last of the modern imitators of MEDEA. They bear a suspicious affinity to the Esher tragedy of the year before last.

But let us go back a step in the argument. The true question is not as to the irresistibility of the impulse, but rather whether a person is or is not responsible for such loss of self-control. Nakedly stated, the irresistible influence proves nothing. A criminal propensity is not, in fact, resisted—and we plunge to the conclusion that it could not have been resisted. Every crime is committed under the absence of control over our actions; but the English law very properly does not allow impunity to a ruffian under the irresistible dominion of drink or rage. The stress laid by the Judges in M'NAUGHTEN'S case on the fact that he was not conscious of right or wrong at the moment of the commission of the murder, was at variance with this sound principle of our jurisprudence. Such a mode of reasoning excludes that responsibility which the law very properly attaches to drunkards. In a word, the law of England does not infer irresistibility from non-resistance.

For our own part, we think that much service would be done to criminal jurisprudence if medical evidence generally were placed under stricter rules than it is at present. Nothing can be more vague and unsatisfactory than the way in which such evidence, especially as regards questions of insanity, is received. It is well known that there are medical authorities who hold that every mind is unsound in some particular, perfect sanity being an attribute denied to our fallen nature; and with such doctors, it is needless to say that crime itself is a sufficient proof of irresponsibility. Again, some of the higher authorities have a theory to support, or a pet distinction to illustrate. They have certain metaphysical, or psychological, or even physiological doctrines to maintain, or they have an antagonist writer to confute; and unconsciously, therefore, they strain the facts of the particular case to support their abstract theory. Or, descending lower in the profession, evidence is received on these most difficult and delicate questions from common practitioners, of little experience and less education, as to the tests of insanity—and this, too, by judges of learning and prudence. Yet it is not too much to say of such evidence that its arrogance is often only equalled by its shallowness. The plea of insanity is too serious to be left to the chance-medley conjectures and haphazard tests of the Union doctor. With the increasing reluctance of juries to convict in any case of murder, medical testimony requires more effectual safeguards and checks than it receives in the ordinary assize practice; and we think that the suggestion thrown out for a permanent board of medical referees on criminal charges might at any rate be seriously entertained. The employment of professional and responsible assessors in Admiralty cases, and the official evidence of the Trinity Board pilots, afford an illustration in point. The recognised tests of insanity—such as the want of motive, the subsequent or antecedent conduct of the criminal, and the absence of accomplices—the existence and relevancy of alleged delusions, and the whole doctrine of monomania, are matters far too obscure and complex to be left to the judgment or prejudices of the general run of medical witnesses.

THE ARCHITECTURAL EXHIBITION.

"*AIDE toi, et Dieu t'aidera*," is a maxim the truth of which is not prematurely breaking upon our young architects. The Royal Academy nominally represented their art, as well as painting and sculpture, in its annual exhibition; and accordingly one of the smaller closets in Trafalgar Square was dubbed the Architectural Room, and set apart for the display of the architectural studies, real and imaginary, possible and impossible, which were annually tendered. So great a privilege, however, appeared in time liable to abuse; and certain it was that those who were honoured by it did not seem adequately grateful. The Architectural Room soon became the West Room—oil paintings overflowed into it with a strong spring tide—and the table upon which space had been found for some half-dozen models was discarded in favour of a visitors' settee. On one occasion, indeed, architecture was not even allowed the half of the West Room, but was actually removed to the "condemned cell."

For awhile, this degradation of a noble and important art was borne, if not patiently, at least helplessly. At last, however, a few years back, a free Architectural Exhibition was organized, which, after various fluctuations of time and place, has since the last season found its locale in the Suffolk-street Gallery, and its time in the winter months. Hitherto, the performance has fallen decidedly below the intention—the reason for which, no doubt, is to a great extent to be found in the enterprise not having dared to assume an independent attitude. Up to the present year, the resuscitation of drawings already shown at the Royal Academy was not forbidden, and the walls of the new Exhibition accordingly not unfrequently presented an aspect not a little ludicrous to those whose memories were retentive enough to carry them back over a few years of Trafalgar Square. This season, however, the managers have taken the wiser and bolder course of refusing any drawing previously exhibited in London; and we may therefore reckon the current Exhibition as the first *bonâ fide* attempt to supply, by voluntary organization, that annual congress of specimens in one of the three fine arts which ought to be provided ungrudgingly within the chambers of the Royal Academy.

Of course, neither that body nor any other can make its Architectural Exhibition as perfect as one of painting or sculpture, for the obvious reason that exhibitions of the two latter arts collect together the actual results—the things themselves which have to be shown. An Architectural Exhibition, on the other hand, can only give us, through the medium of one or other of those very arts, the effigies of the things desired to be made public. Moreover, these effigies are themselves liable to falsification, either to their advantage or their disadvantage, according to the capacity and the honesty of the draughtsman or modeller employed. Still there was no reason, because of this inherent imperfection, that the Academy, after undertaking to provide that important exhibition, should do so in a manner calculated to render the imperfection more glaring and more irremediable than the nature of the case required.

Above all things, an Architectural Exhibition demands ample wall and table space, in order, by multiplied plans, elevations, sections, and models, to give something like a complete and artistic expression to the more important buildings which it brings to the bar of public criticism. This was just what the Academy never would give. Accordingly, our architects have too much fallen into the reprehensible custom of exclusively exhibiting, not *designs*, but what are technically known as "Academy Drawings," i.e., showy water-colour sketches, executed by a class of painters who lay themselves out for this special profession. Their function is to trick out their employers' works with all the unscrupulous effects which a bold application of *chiaro-scuro*, indiscriminate proportions, *ad libitum* trees, big red flowers, and smart ladies with pronounced shawls, lounging about, &c. &c., can contribute towards bewildering the judgment. These perspective drawings are of course not only pretty, but useful, when they are shown together with the severe truth-telling plans, elevations, and sections, which cannot delude except in the almost impossible way of direct falsification. When, however, they are employed, not as the supplement but as the substitute, they indicate and encourage a low estimate of the responsibilities which a public body incurs in opening, and architects in accepting, an exhibition. An architect knows that he cannot openly trifle with his employer, and accordingly the *bonâ fide* drawings are always at the disposal of the latter. But the public can be trifled with, and so it is forced to accept and be thankful for showy water-colours where it expected architectural designs. This system is, we believe, exclusively insular; and the French expressed no small amount of astonishment during the late Exhibition, when they beheld so many pretty pictures and so few measured designs representing the architecture of England. It might be a question how far our architects owe it to this very practice, that the awards then given so egregiously failed in finding out the best talent. At the same time, the minor species of French critics found easy means of cloaking their own absurd ignorance of English men and things, by running off upon senseless laudations of the "*charmantes aquarelles*" submitted to their gaze.

We are far from wishing to imply that the present Architectural Exhibition presents a very marked improvement in this respect. We wish it did. But it certainly offends less than

the Royal Academy is wont to do; and yet its wall-space is not adequately covered. As architects become more and more accustomed to the possession, not of superabundant, but of moderate elbow-room, in that proportion will their self-respect lead them, first one and then the other, not to commit their reputations to the concocters of flashy drawings on the George Robins principle. Plans may, perhaps, come last—but plans are indispensable; and they need not take up any room, if they are arranged, for the reference of the *cognoscente*, in portfolios lying on the Exhibition tables, each of which might be indorsed on the outside correspondingly to the numbers of the elevations on the wall.

In the actual Exhibition, we observe the names of but few of the leaders of the profession. Different causes may be assigned for this absence. As regards those who belong to the Royal Academy, the regulations of that Institution impose a prohibition against exhibiting except within its walls; and to this we conclude we owe the absence of Mr. Scott, who has heretofore generously enriched the rising Exhibition. The seniors who are not members of that body might, we think, accept the new Institution as having already established its position as a vehicle for introducing their works to the public.

The recent competition for the Oxford Museum furnishes several specimens. Among them are those of Mr. E. M. Barry, who sent in three designs, of which one gained the second premium; the two others were unnoticed. We think it would have been wiser if he had not brought the latter before the public with his name. One of them resembles a magnified villa in Italian, and the other a villa in pointed—neither possessing any distinctive character. Mr. Gariand, who gained the sixth premium, likewise exhibits. His design, in late Continental pointed, displays a creditable acquaintance with detail in the shape of high roofs, crestings, &c., but is deficient in point and force. None of the other competitors who exhibited in Suffolk-street need, we think, be surprised that their contributions were rejected—they are all modifications of Italian. One design strikingly resembles stables on an enlarged scale; while another displays four angular towers, giving his whole otherwise monotonous pile the appearance of being borrowed from St. John's Church, Westminster. The new Birmingham and Midland Institute is also largely represented on the present occasion, in various designs showing different modifications of classical architecture, which we need not particularize.

Among the most interesting studies are several of that peculiar class of palatial structures, destined either for warehouses or for club chambers, which are every day springing up in the thoroughfares of our large towns, and already promise to go far to relieve the mean monotony of the London streets, and to transform Manchester in appearance, as it has been transformed in law, from a town to a city. Living as English families do in self-contained houses, it is in this class of building mainly that our architects find scope for that display of the principles of palatial composition for which every one of the many-apartmented houses of a Continental town is available. We are far from saying that all, or even the majority, of those already built are successful; but every year we notice an improvement in general effect, in purity and richness of detail, as well as in actual height and bulk over preceding structures. Among those now exhibited, we were struck with the designs for the warehouse at Manchester, in course of erection for the Messrs. Watts, by Messrs. Travers and Mangall, of the prodigious dimensions of 300 feet in length, with a depth of 90, and height of 115, of Yorkshire stone, and to cost, we are told, exclusively of site, &c., 45,000*l.* The style is rather mixed, Byzantine features being introduced with a sky line of Italian, or rather Elizabethan character. Nevertheless, its size being considered, the effect of the building must be very imposing, while the zeal for something more than mere utility on the part of the erector is highly creditable. Offices in the same city by Mr. Waterhouse also merit a passing notice. More artistic are the Tavistock Chambers, which Mr. C. Gray is now rearing at the corner of Tavistock and Southampton streets, in which he boldly attempts a considerable amount of external constructional polychrome, while many of his details are borrowed from the Romanesque style. Of the application of pure pointed style to street and house architecture—a problem which the world will regard now with very different eyes from what it would have done twenty years since—we have several specimens, though none of them are for buildings on a large scale. The most successful is a house now being erected for, we are told, the small sum of 2300*l.*, at Birmingham, by Mr. J. C. Chamberlain, in red, white, and blue bricks, with Bath stone dressings, and further enriched externally by encaustic tiles. The style partakes of Italian pointed, a form of Gothic from which much assistance may be gathered towards adapting mediæval architecture to the modern domestic and public wants of street building. Messrs. Beadel, Son, and Chancellor, are named as the architects of a covered homestead, with steam machinery, at Hains Hill, Berkshire, in red brick, which is commendable for a truthfulness and simplicity of treatment evolving effective grouping. We are sorry to see this design attributed to a firm of three, when it must have been the work of one man. Architectural partnerships, however useful commercially, are a decided clog upon art, for they check originality in the forward partner, while the copyist and the man of routine are tempted to take refuge under corporate irresponsibility.

Some of our readers may remember—though most will probably have forgotten—the name of a French architect, M. Horeau, who gained some temporary notoriety six years ago, from nearly winning the first prize for the then prospective "Great Exhibition." M. Horeau, at all events, is determined to revive the general consciousness of his existence, and so he sends a huge and sketchy water-colour, with a long description, of which the first words are: "Frontispiece of several schemes and sketches for rendering London and its environs more salubrious and more agreeable." Out of Nephelococcygia (or not to mention similar institutions in not yet salubrious London) Charenton, we never beheld anything so monstrous. Crystal Palaces gone wild—public monuments seen in bad dreams—a bridge over the Thames in one span, straddled by a big iron structure, arch and pyramid in one, and a grim statue at top—and finally, a balloon caught and kept stationary to serve as finger-post to the Universal Exhibition; these are some of the materials composing this Frontispiece—of brass. M. Horeau may be satisfied that he has gained one point—he has established beyond a cavil his own position in point of taste and sense, and has made the question of his ever being employed for any work, public or private, one to which there can be but a single reply.

The specimens of ecclesiastical architecture exhibited are numerous. That they represent the actual condition of this important speciality, we cannot admit, missing from the catalogue the names (among others) of R. Brandon, Butterfield, Ferrey, Hansom, Scott, and Street. Most of the churches given are reproductions—more or less faithful and spirited, though frequently failures—of the first and middle styles of pointed architecture. Occasionally, however, a bold innovation is attempted—often more bold than thoroughly satisfactory—as when Mr. C. Gray, in a suburban church, tries the effect of trefoiling all his arches, and Mr. Truefitt, in a work in erection at Manchester, discards altogether moulding and chamfer. Under this head, we must notice Mr. Clutton's design for the now abandoned Training Institution of the National Society, which, but for inconceivable mismanagement—for which he is in no way responsible—would have been built in Victoria-street. It is a collegiate pile of the middle pointed style, with the chapel the most prominent feature, and deserves great credit for the altitude (a *main* point in modern town architecture) given to the building. A gothic church built in Rome by an Englishman would appear an incredible combination of circumstances, and yet it seems that Mr. Wigley—who ever he may be—is actually fulfilling them.

We regret to see Carpenter posthumously represented by two interiors of a restoration, and by some lithographs upon a small scale, which will give the general visitor a very inadequate impression of his capacities. He was, indeed, a much greater man than the world, during his lifetime, gave him credit for. The exquisite purity and proportion of his mind led him rather to seek for the exhibition of those qualities in his works than to strive after startling effects; and yet, rightly comprehended, he was one of our most original architects. We believe that, with all the drawbacks of delicate health and an early death, he has left enough behind to found a durable and increasing reputation, and to prove to posterity that, with life and vigour preserved, his later works would have been of still higher excellence.

As might be anticipated, we find numerous specimens of those cemetery chapels which imperative legislation is raising all over England, in much the same way as a hot autumnal sun after rain brings up the mushrooms. Upon those which are shown in Suffolk-street, we have a single criticism to make; and that is, that with all their diversity in feeble attempts after originality, they are, one and all, miserable failures. The universal style adopted is that which is decidedly best suited (by the common consent of all—Churchman, Congregationalist, Roman Catholic, and Baptist, each of whom now uses it) for religious buildings—the pointed. But here our praise must end. Even in an architectural aspect, the application of this style is marked by no force. We see much eccentricity, but little poetry of invention. In graver respects, the buildings are still less deserving of approbation. They seem constructed upon the simple principle of making the dissenting chapel as like a church, and the church-chapel as like a meeting-house, as possible, except in those instances when both are jumbled together in a single omnibus erection. This method of proceeding is very little complimentary to either form of Christianity, and singularly inappropriate in the present instance. Irrespective of the theological differences, and of the natural feelings of regret, hope, or sympathy which all acts of interment are meant to symbolize, and which one party considers that it best fulfils in one way, and another in a different one, it is a fact that the Church theory of burial is that of a set service, while the Dissenting one is antagonistic to a fixed form of words. Common sense, then, ought to dictate that respect should be shown to these differences, by embodying each idea, with equal structural magnificence, in the respective cemetery chapels. But this is just the reverse of what we find; and so the results are simply deplorable. We much regret this, when we consider what a field was opened for talent, undeveloped or neglected, in the sudden and inevitable demand for so much architecture, which the new law of extra-mural interment created. The reason is not difficult to seek—viz., the absence, except in a few centres of population, of architects proper, and the superabundance of

builders and surveyors. Each locality of course gave the work to its own man—and the probabilities were that its own man was about as fitted to grapple with the emergency as the regimental bandmaster would be to lead a forlorn hope. We can at least gather experience from discomfiture—a usual thing enough in other affairs as well as architecture, but not the more consolatory on that account.

There is a feature in the present Exhibition which was not absent from that of last year, but which now comes out with greater prominence than heretofore, and which we welcome with considerable satisfaction—the display of materials and of manufactures, useful and ornamental, employed in the construction of buildings. If for no other end than as a perpetual monition to the architect that his work is only going to begin, and not approaching its conclusion, when the design has been achieved, we consider that these tangible evidences of habitation as the end of building are exceedingly appropriate in an architectural exposition. Only they must not be allowed to usurp the first place; and, above all things, the Exhibition must not be allowed to sink into a bazaar. If such an abuse is permitted, farewell to its ever fulfilling its higher mission of artistic progress.

Upon the whole, the present Exhibition decidedly shows advance. At the same time, we should be very sorry if it were accepted, either at home or abroad, as the criterion of the actual condition of architecture in England. There is enough stuff in it to prove that our young architects have begun to think. The enlargement of the catalogue of materials, whether for constructive or decorative ends, which modern science has made available, is now no longer a subject of controversy, hardly even of hesitation. But what is wanted is that combined steadiness and facility in the application of those materials which nothing can give but the systematizing among us of architecture as a learned and liberal profession. Our architects deal with iron and glass, and with constructive polychromy, through the marbles of nature and the ceramic ware of art, in an empiric spirit. One of them accordingly succeeds, and another fails, according to his individual genius, learning, and appreciation of the beautiful. This is well under present circumstances; for otherwise they would have to forego their use altogether. *Splendide errare* is a better condition for the architectural England of 1856 than to be ever crawling on in the tame, dead correctness of the schools. Still, for a permanence, so chaotic a condition of things would be intolerable. Equally intolerable would be the perpetuation and enlargement of the scholastic yoke, by simply remodelling the Academies so as to create an individual tyranny over each distinctive style. In architecture, as in all matters, the difficult and delicate, but not impossible, *juste milieu* has to be hit off—the junction of order and rule with individual liberty. In architecture it has, we are convinced, to be attained by reforming—we should rather say *creating*—a liberal system of education for the architectural student, which shall be stringent before the diploma can be granted, while, when he has once graduated, the “Master of Architecture” ought to be free to help in making or marring the national taste.

A REVOLUTION IN A CORNER.

THE *London Gazette* of yesterday week contained the sometime expected announcement that the universally respected Baron Parke had been called to the Upper House by the title of Lord Wensleydale. It also contained an unexpected corollary that the enjoyment of the Peerage by the Parke family is limited to the “natural life” of the first and last Baron Wensleydale. It may be within the prerogative of the Crown to create life-peerages; but this right has, centuries ago, been allowed to fall into perfect desuetude, except in the single case (and this hardly an exception) of an eldest son called up during his father's lifetime for one of his baronies—in which case the *ad interim* peer becomes, as it were, a co-partner with the head of his house. So the question irresistibly presses itself—*Why* make so great an innovation in the case of Baron Parke? And, in the second place, why make it so secretly and so shortly before the meeting of Parliament, when the change might and ought to have been discussed, if not embodied in some enactment? And, finally, why make it in the case of one who, even if raised to the peerage upon the ordinary terms, would, it is known, have been the last as well as the first Lord Wensleydale? It is self-evident that the precedent here set involves a revolution in the actual condition of the Upper House; and yet it has been effected, not quietly and unostentatiously—these are words too mild to paint the transaction—but absolutely in the darkest darkness, when men's minds were running on Paris, or St. Petersburg, or Kars, or Palmer, on any and everything, in fact, but the constitution of the hereditary branch of the Legislature.

The question has nothing in the world to do with a matter which has often been discussed, viz., whether a class of legal “prelates” with life seats in the Upper House might not be created, matching the ecclesiastical prelates. There is much, we grant, to be said for this innovation. But the creation of the life-peerage of Wensleydale is no instalment of it—quite the reverse. Every one knows, as it happens, that the new Lord was a Judge, and is a Peer because his great ability and learning will

make him a most valuable addition to that small knot of peers who are competent to sit on appeals. But this consideration does not, and cannot, appear upon his patent. He is Lord Wensleydale simply and absolutely, though he has been a Judge—just as Lord Gough is a Lord simply and absolutely, though he has been a Commander-in-Chief; but, unlike Lord Gough, he is the one peer for centuries who has been created on the exceptional footing of a life tenure.

Even supposing that the innovation were, in its most extended form, an advantage—assuming it to be desirable to create a class of life peers, not only out of the law, but out of all other professions—is that any reason why the act should be so crudely, and apparently so inconsequently done? There are questions of descent attaching even to a life-peerage, which must be defined one way or the other, and which ought to have been defined by a competent authority before the class to which they apply came into existence. A life-peer may have children, sons and daughters—what is their style and their precedence? Is a life-peer's eldest son to have, all his days, the rank of the eldest son of an hereditary peer? This would seem absurd. Then, is he to be, as it were, his own younger brother? There is no absolute reason why he should hold that position; and yet it would seem the most sensible plan, for the third alternative—his sinking with his brothers into simple esquires—is one which would hardly be tolerated by that national feeling in favour of the peerage, which, in spite of radical blusterers, still exists. But the embroglio does not end here. What is to become of the daughters? By the old prescription of English precedence, all daughters are of equal primogeniture, and take the rank of their eldest brother. If the eldest son of a life-peer is not to have equal rank with the eldest son of an hereditary one, then either a new system must be devised to regulate the daughters' precedence, which only regards the eldest son, ignoring all others, or all the daughters will rank above their brothers. So long as life-peerages are limited to baronies and viscounties, of course these entanglements will be less conspicuous; but we are bound in theory to anticipate life grants of those higher titles which involve courtesy lords and ladies, and to provide for them, unless it can be shown that the notion of manufacturing life dukes would be intolerable to a Minister angling for votes when parties run close.

We shall not be accused of any yellowplush veneration for mere rank because we make these observations. The whole subject of honourables, courtesy lords, Ladies Agatha, Beatrice, &c. &c., is of course utterly frivolous in itself, in comparison with the great constitutional question of the best composition of the Upper House. But still there is a system of precedence, of considerable antiquity—and it is not a little thought of in many quarters. A wise and provident Administration would therefore have taken it into consideration, and not have precipitated an innovation, which must, if nakedly made, involve inextricable confusion.

In a word, the reason of the late step, calmly viewed, is as inexplicable as its reality is incontestable. All that is left to us is to ask, Wherefore such sharp practice? Why is an innovation so complete—a revolution so violent in the immemorial condition of one of our two Houses of Legislature—perpetrated rather less than three weeks before the day on which that Legislature is summoned to meet again? Why was the fact not ventilated to the public? Why was free discussion evaded, and Parliamentary deliberation made impossible? Does the Government think itself so strong that it is able to do anything it pleases without apprehension of criticism? Or does it intend to cloak some sudden change of policy in the surprise which this most unprecedented stretch of prerogative must create? Perhaps Lord Palmerston has taken sudden fright at the very harmless demonstrations of the Administrative Reform Association, and has thrown out to that body the tub of a rebuff to the principle of hereditary legislation; or, perhaps, it is courage, and not fright, which makes him eager to prove that he too is competent to command the Channel fleet, perform the operation for the stone, or build St. Paul's. A third alternative remains—it may be simple, sublime, gay, airy indifference. In any aspect of the matter, the proceeding is singularly perplexing—perfectly barren as it is of any conceivable advantage in itself, while it may be productive of infinite mischief, by affording a precedent of a Minister's lightly breaking through one of the most ancient, best-understood, and universally accepted of constitutional principles by a freakish exercise of prerogative. To add to the complexity, the only possible result which could be reasonably desired by a statesman is one which, as we have seen, is in no way realized in the present case. It may, or it may not, be desirable to have a bench of life-dignitaries sitting opposite the life Bishops in the House of Lords. But it cannot be desirable to confuse this question by cropping of his hereditary rights a member of that House who is not a *dignitary* any more than he is a Bishop, but simply a Baron, called up like any other Baron, by her Majesty's letters patent issued at her Royal pleasure. The very fact that the title of Wensleydale was not likely to descend beyond the present holder, was the best reason for not selecting this case for the perpetration of a change at once gratuitously clandestine and practically unnecessary. That the question is one which Ministers will be allowed to tide over in silence, we do not believe. We shall wait with equal patience and curiosity to hear their justification.

REVIEWS.

KEIGHTLEY'S LIFE OF MILTON.*

MR. KEIGHTLEY has written a very useful book. The mere biography of Milton is not of much importance, for all the material facts of his life which are known to us might be compressed in a dozen pages. But Mr. Keightley has done something more than lengthen these dozen pages to a hundred. He has given an analysis of Milton's opinions on philosophy and religion, an account of the subject and occasion of his several poems and prose writings, and has made his notice of the latter valuable by inserting copious extracts—thus enabling lazy readers to form something like a just estimate of those treatises, so much praised and so little read. Throughout he displays great industry and knowledge, and a sincere admiration of his author. But though these qualities in the author are sufficient to redeem a book from being useless or contemptible, they are not all we desire. One of the first requisites in writing is, that the writer should appreciate his own position; but Mr. Keightley has no notion of this, and his volume is disfigured by a childish egotism and self-satisfied littleness that make the reader long to throw it in the fire. He is always bringing in something personal to himself. At the outset he advises those who wish to know the times in which Milton lived, to read "our" *History of England* (alas! for the reader that complies). He adduces as a proof of the want of attention in England to poetical subjects, the slow sale of "our own *Mythology of Greece and Italy*." And after speaking of Milton's travels, he adds the interesting information, that "we feel a kind of pride at the reflection, that our own route in Italy the only time we have been able to visit it, and the time we spent in its various cities, have several points of coincidence with those of Milton." It is disappointing to find that such proneness to the most undisguised tittle-tattle can co-exist with a hearty love and appreciation of *Paradise Lost*.

We may almost say that nothing is known of Milton's life. We know, indeed, that he studied at Cambridge, and travelled in Italy, that he subsequently kept a small school, was Latin secretary under Cromwell, and married three wives; but all that constitutes the genuine interest of biography is wanting. He has, indeed, in the *Apology for Smectymnus*, given a minute account of his daily life, of the pursuits in which he was interested, and the simple pleasures in which he indulged. For a moment, as we read this account, the veil is withdrawn, and we see him as he was. But we are soon again in darkness; we cannot trace the history of his mind; we cannot tell the influences that acted on his imagination, nor the relation between his outward actions and his inward feelings. The art of biography had not been invented in his time. Both in its bad and in its good shape, it is of modern growth. It has been reserved for our days to chronicle, in endless volumes octavo, the career of a watering-place chaplain, or a third-rate poet; but it has also been reserved to our days to write, as Mr. Stanley has written in his *Life of Arnold*. The collection of bare facts or bare stories, which has been handed down as the *Life of Milton*, presents little in common with either class of modern biography. It consists mainly of memoranda relating to petty events which, at this distance of time, do not concern us in any degree whatever. We may learn, if we care to learn, that Milton changed his London residence six or seven times—we can ascertain the neighbourhoods into which he moved—and, if we call in Mr. Keightley to help us, we can have the pleasure of speculating whether this change took place in May or June, and that in December or January. Milton's life is not quite a blank to us, for we are able to arrange his writings in chronological order, a matter of considerable importance. But, beyond this, the paucity of our knowledge cannot be eked out by a narrative the truth of which is equally doubtful and immaterial. And Mr. Keightley not only gives this narrative in the most lengthy form of which it is susceptible, but he employs an expedient which adds considerably to its bulk. If he does not know what did happen, he guesses what might have happened; and it is obvious that any one has only to go on guessing to make his story what length he pleases. We will give one or two instances. He is speaking of Milton's first wife, and having described her parentage and fortune, says, "What the personal attractions of the bride were we are not informed, but in all likelihood they were not great, for the imagination of poets sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt." Again, after narrating the death of the lady whom a hack quotation thus enables him to pronounce ugly, he falls to speculating how Milton got on in his household without her, and chastises the indolence of former biographers who had omitted to prosecute this important inquiry. His own solution is as follows:—"The most natural supposition would be, that he got some respectable matron to take the charge of his family; but we fear that the truth is that he did not act so prudently, but, to the manifest injury of his daughters, did as well as he could with ordinary servants." Any one who wishes to learn how to

make ten pages out of five will find this *Life of Milton* a most excellent study.

If Milton's prose writings were really read in these days, Mr. Keightley's analysis of his opinions would be superfluous; for these opinions are but the main arguments of the several treatises—so much so that afterwards, in giving an account of those treatises, Mr. Keightley is obliged to repeat a great portion of what he last said under the head of Opinions. But the prose writings are so little read that we can afford to have their contents presented more than once to our notice. We see the character of Milton, the turn of his mind, the drift of his thoughts, better perhaps in his prose than in his poetry. We are made to recognise the impassable gulf which divides him from us, and his times from our times. The separation is not in the opinions themselves. The opinions of Milton, taking them as a whole, are those which reappear in our modern life, and are most reflected in English history. But the way in which he held these opinions was totally different from the way in which alone it is possible that we can hold them. Milton believed that, when he wrote of the reform he longed for in Church and State, the Spirit of God guided his thoughts and moulded their expression. What should we think of the sanity of a modern pamphleteer who claimed to be inspired? We cannot feel as a man felt who was possessed by such a conviction, any more than we can, with any meaning, really invoke the muse if we wish to write poetry. Nor can any effort of the mind throw us back far enough into the past to see this world and the next with the eyes of Milton. But, as we can refresh and quicken our powers of perceiving and apprehending the beauties of nature, by studying the feelings those beauties awakened in the Greek and Hebrew poets, so we may give life to our current and traditional opinions by looking on them as they stand transfigured in the light of Milton's genius. The love of personal freedom, the detestation of corruption in government, and impatience of religious intolerance, are so familiar to us, so much a part of ourselves, that except by going back into the past, we cannot separate ourselves from them, nor look on them with that distinctness which is the only source of reality. In Milton's poetry we see the fruit—in his prose, the process by which the fruit was formed. It must, however, be confessed that his prose writings are lengthy in argument and monotonous in style; and Mr. Keightley has therefore made a well-judged and valuable contribution to a general acquaintance with Milton, by giving copious extracts, judiciously chosen from those treatises, and interspersing comments sufficient to explain the circumstances under which they were written.

The poems are so well known that it would have been a great mistake to fill the volume with selections from them; and readers of Milton will find all that it is possible or material to learn of the subjects and occasions of the different pieces, in the short account Mr. Keightley has given of each separately. This part of the work is characterized by two great excellences—the statements of facts are faithful and minute, and no attempt is made to criticise the poems themselves. The positive virtue of fidelity in facts has made this incomparably the best introduction we can have to the poetry of Milton; while the negative virtue of abstinence from criticism has saved us from what we dreaded to find in so prosy a writer—page after page of milk-and-water panegyric. We are instructed without being bored; and that is a great deal to say of any book. The volume closes with an introduction to *Paradise Lost*, which, among other things, includes an elaborate exposure of the fallacy contained in a brilliant sentence written long ago by Mr. Macaulay. In his well known essay on Milton, Mr. Macaulay compares Milton with Dante, on the ground that both were statesmen and both were lovers. The general reader would easily pardon a mis-statement made in Mr. Macaulay's earliest days of writing; but the biographer of Milton may naturally wish to point out that Milton was neither the one nor the other. Milton was no more a statesman than a dragoman at Constantinople is a statesman. Latin was the common language of the civilized world, and Milton was selected, as an accomplished Latin scholar, to translate State papers from the vulgar into the learned tongue. Nor was he conspicuous as a lover. Perhaps no man who married three wives ever showed more plainly that he wanted a wife because he wanted a house-keeper; and no one who wrote poetry for half a century ever made love less frequently the theme of his verses. The comparison of Milton with Dante carries Mr. Keightley into an account of Dante's life—thence into an exposition of the *Divina Comedia*, on the principles of Rossetti, who looked on it as merely an anti-papal satire—thence into reminiscences of Mr. Keightley's acquaintance with Rossetti—and lastly, into a favourable notice of Rossetti's wife—by which time Mr. Keightley has digressed considerably from his main subject, and afforded a very pretty specimen of the rambling style of composition. The reader will, however, find in this Introduction many useful hints for the perusal of *Paradise Lost*; especially with regard to the structure of the versification, and to Milton's notions of cosmogony, which an attentive observer may see to be exclusively derived from the Ptolemaic system. Altogether, Mr. Keightley has written a book which we are very glad to possess; and he has shown that a great amount of foolish conceit does not prevent an honest and laborious man from doing good in his generation.

* An Account of the Life, Opinions, and Writings of John Milton. With an Introduction to *Paradise Lost*. By Thomas Keightley. London: Chapman and Hall. 1855.

WOODS v. RUSSELL.*

THE popular view of the campaign in the Crimea is summed up in the apophthegm attributed to—perhaps invented for—the Russians, about the army of lions commanded by asses. Two great historians—Messrs. Woods and Russell—have favoured the world with a republication of the correspondence which originally produced this impression. The work of the gentleman first named has been made the subject of a vehement panegyric by the *Times*, and his assertions have been triumphantly appealed to as confirming and bearing out the statements of the gentleman whose praise is in all the shop windows, and whom the Parthenon Club delights to honour. As we happen to feel some regard for the reputation of our country—as we cannot quite acquiesce in the doctrine that the inferiority of England to France, the miserable imbecility of our Government and our soldiers, the stupid pride of our aristocracy, the slavish toadyism of our middle classes, and the brutal stupidity and inveterate sottishness of the poor, are proper subjects for noisy rejoicing, public festivities, and after-dinner exultation—we have gone through the task (not a very light one) of examining some of the authorities upon which the opinions in question rest; and we cannot say that the result has been to impress us with any great reverence for the abilities or truthfulness of our self-chosen censors.

Of Mr. Russell we have spoken on former occasions. Our last new Thucydides is Mr. N. A. Woods, late Special Correspondent of the *Morning Herald*. This candid gentleman disclaims in his Preface all "pretensions to military criticism." In fact, he seems to think it unnecessary, because "public opinion on military matters, though sometimes hasty, is seldom very wrong"—which opinion, from a gentleman who, by his own account, knows nothing about strategy, is of course entitled to great weight. Nevertheless Mr. Woods "points to well known mistakes," and states "less generally known deficiencies," and his readers, at any rate, "cannot fail to see that" his "narrative is true, and therefore impartial." It is very characteristic of Mr. Woods to appeal to his readers for the truth of his narrative; and it is a blessing that the public are endowed with this unerring power of distinguishing truth from falsehood. If it were not so, they might be rather at a loss for an opinion upon the subject, for the question is entirely one of detail, and of very dry detail too. The questions to be decided are such as these—How many carts had the Commissariat at Varna? What was the evidence about the healthiness of the Camp there? How many surgeons were there at the Alma? What stores and other resources were at their disposal? What clothing was there at Balaklava? What was the morning state of the army on such a day? and so on. In fact, the questions upon which the whole inquiry hinges are as dry and as special as if they related to invoices, bills of exchange, dock warrants, and accounts current. It may, therefore, well be that Mr. Woods has drawn most lively pictures of the theatrical parts of the war, and yet that he is utterly untrustworthy when he comes to facts. Indeed, no artist's "blood" is redder, no one's "thunder" louder, no one's "wounds" more frightful, no one deals so well with "gangrene," "maggots," "filth unutterable," and "festering masses of corruption;" but it does not follow that he is equally reliable when he says that such a regiment, on such a day, mustered only so many men, or that such a drug ran short in such an hospital. As upon these details everything depends, and as we have the advantage of being in a position to command the testimony of two such men as Messrs. Woods and Russell, we have compared some of their statements, acting upon the suggestion of the *Times* itself, which, whilst declining, with an engaging modesty, to execute the task on its own account, remarks that its readers will naturally make the comparison.

A striking instance of Mr. Woods's "union" with Mr. Russell is, according to their common patron, to be found in their accounts of the mismanagement of the Government, and especially of the commissariat, at Varna. Mr. Woods says—

If ever the English were to have had good commissariat arrangements, they should have been at Varna; yet the very reverse was the case. Almost daily service letters went in to the heads of the commissariat departments from assistant commissaries in charge of divisions, stating that they were unable to provide the requisite amount of bread and meat for the support of the troops. (i. 86.)

Mr. Russell says (June 9)—

Altogether the station seems excellent, and as the commissariat is not deficient in supplies of all the essentials of bread and beef, there is no cause for complaint. (83, 84.)

And again, June 26—

The commissariat are doing their duty manfully. The quality of the meat is really very good.

On July 21, we are told—

The meat furnished by the commissariat is excellent. Some of the surgeons think the ration is not large enough, as the meat is lean and deficient in nutritive quality, when compared with English beef and mutton; but it should be stated that, in order to compensate for that deficiency, the weight of the ration has been increased from three-quarters of a pound to one pound per day. (p. 103.)

* *History of the late Campaign.* By N. A. Woods. London: Longmans, 1855.

History of the War. By W. H. Russell. London: Routledge, 1855.

Mr. Woods and Mr. Russell agree in thinking that it was an account of deficiency in the means of land transport that Silistria was not relieved. Upon whom did the blame rest? Mr. Woods, writing of the middle of June, says—

It was plain to every one at Varna that the French were not numerous enough to advance alone to its (Silistria's) help, and that, under any circumstances, the English were not able to advance at all. (i. 83.)

There was one person at Varna to whom this was not so obvious. A month later (July 21) Mr. Russell writes thus—

They (the French) are not in a better condition to march into the interior than we are. . . . They are obliged . . . to send on the general staff of the administration some sixteen days or a fortnight before they move. . . . We, on the contrary, carry our stores with us, and are at this moment, as I have said, better able to march *en masse* than they are. (p. 124.)

Nor do Messrs. Woods and Russell agree upon the question of military luxuries. In a passage which the *Times* quotes with curious exultation, Mr. Woods says:—

Only 8000 lbs. of tea had been sent out by the Government, and this absurdly small stock was expended a few days after our landing. The men seldom got their full rations, that is to say, either the sugar, coffee, or meat were deficient, and on very many occasions they had only bread and water for breakfast. Even such a simple article as rice was not to be had on any terms. (i. 86, 87.)

Writing on the 14th of June, Mr. Russell says:—

Sorry am I to say that the men are dissatisfied, because the store of sugar is run out, and fellows who never were accustomed, before they enlisted, to anything better than a drink of buttermilk and a potato, declare they cannot take their tea or coffee without sugar. (p. 21.)

On the 20th of June, he writes:—

I regret very much to have to state that for several days last week there was neither rice, nor sugar, nor preserved potatoes, nor tea. The men had then to make their breakfast simply on ration brown bread and water. . . . Within these last three or four days, a little rice has again been served out, and small quantities of tea. (p. 96.)

And writing on the 21st July, he tells us that the quantity of food issued by the commissariat seems almost fabulous. In addition to 110,000 lbs. of corn, &c., issued for the horses, 27,000 lbs. of meat, 27,000 rations of bread, and "the same quantity of rice, tea, coffee, sugar, &c.," were issued daily. (p. 123.)

So that whilst Mr. Woods implies that the whole time spent at Varna was a time of hardship, Mr. Russell's only grievance is that between the 14th and 16th or 17th of June, the troops had no tea for breakfast; nor are the differences between the two correspondents at an end when they leave Varna. As our object at present is only to compare our two authorities, we will pass over various points which might require notice in narrating, and confine ourselves to a single point in which they are curiously at issue. Speaking of alleged irregularities in the disembarkation, Mr. Russell says:—

The greatest offender against the prescribed order of disembarkation was the Admiral himself, who, instead of filling the place assigned to him in the centre of his fleet, anchored four miles from the shore. (p. 160.)

And again:—

In our fleet, the whole labour and responsibility of the disembarkation rested with Sir E. Lyons. The Admiral remained, as I have said, aloof, and took no share in the proceedings of the day. (p. 161.)

Mr. Woods says:—

Admiral Dundas was in his place in the centre of the line-of-battle ships, which were moored about three miles off the shore, outside the transports, to protect them in case of the Russian fleet making any desperate attempt in the night.

Speaking of a village near the English position, Mr. Woods says—

The outskirts were crowded with stacks of hay and barley, and large flocks of sheep and cattle. These, though we wanted fresh meat and forage, their owners declined to sell at any price. They had evidently been cautioned by the Russians against affording us any assistance. As strict orders had been issued that the property of the natives was to be respected, and as in nearly every instance, they refused to sell, the English did without their supplies as they best could. Such was not the case with our allies. They fixed a fair price on the articles they wanted, gave the money, and took the goods, and the people seemed very well content to have a market thus thrust upon them.

Mr. Russell, speaking apparently of the same place (though we cannot be quite sure of this), says that it "was sacked by some French marauders, with every excess of brutal cruelty and ferocity. I need not repeat the details, indeed they are too shocking to humanity." Not one word of this—wherever it happened—does Mr. Woods mention. Mr. Russell proceeds, "They (the French razzias) frighten them from our markets, and will soon deprive us of the vast supplies to be obtained from the natives." (p. 170.) Some more minute discrepancies are very instructive, because they show how little these gentlemen are to be depended upon in matters of detail. Mr. Woods says "it will be scarcely credited that nearly 1200 sick" were placed on board the *Kangaroo* on a particular occasion. (i. 309.) Mr. Russell says, on the same occasion, that there were "about 1500." Where accuracy in number is the one thing needful, these gentlemen seem to make mere guesses. So, in speaking of the skirmish at Bouljanak, Mr. Woods says that "we had only six-pounders," that our artillery could not effect much, that the Russians continued steady under fire, and then wheeled off and slowly retired. (i. 324.) Mr. Russell states that our cannon "ploughed up the columns of the cavalry, who speedily dispersed into broken lines, wheeling round

and round with great adroitness, to escape the six and nine pound balls." (p. 175).

Perhaps as curious a contradiction as any is one which relates to the battle of Balaklava. In a page of which the running title is "Bravo, Highlanders! well done!" Mr. Russell tells a most picturesque story of how the Russian horse charged the 93rd, the ground flying under their feet, and the assailants gathering speed at every stride—how the Highlanders fired two volleys at them, one at 600 yards, which had no effect, and one at 150 yards, which "carried death and terror into the Russians"—and how Sir Colin Campbell said, "I did not think it worth while to form them even four deep." According to Mr. Woods, this is a mere theatrical romance. His statement is that, at from 700 to 800 yards, a volley was fired at the Russians without effect—that then the Turks ran away—that the Russians advanced at a trot to within 400 or 500 yards—that the Highlanders then fired a second volley also without effect—and that the Russians slowly retired. (Mr. Russell says, "they wheel about, open files right and left, and fly back faster than they came.")—(Woods, ii. 70-1, Russell, 227.) As to Sir Colin Campbell's alleged speech, Mr. Woods declares that he never made any such "absurd remark," adding that, if the Highlanders had been charged, Sir Colin would have ordered them to form square. Though both these gentlemen were eye-witnesses, both at Bouljanak and at Balaklava, they are in direct contradiction; and if Mr. Russell really made up this romantic story to flatter the public, what reliance can be placed on any statement he makes?

These are some of the discrepancies between these gentlemen's accounts which we have met with in a not very elaborate examination of their books. They bear a larger proportion to the total number of facts stated than our readers would suppose; for the mass of verbiage which is introduced into each book is not only surprising, but wearisome. We do not by any means wish it to be inferred from the above comparison that Mr. Russell is always in the wrong. He seems to us to be at times more reasonable than Mr. Woods, and indeed it must be allowed that Mr. Woods is about the lowest authority in matters of fact—perhaps we may except Mr. Russell—that we ever happened to meet with. We will not tire our readers with a criticism of the miserably inconclusive evidence on which he impugns the conduct of the war. "I hear," "It is said," "I am told," is all he knows about it. He is, by his own confession, avowed nearly as often as he has occasion to make a statement, a mere retailer of gossip the correctness of which it is generally impossible to check. We will therefore confine ourselves to two or three flagrant instances of carelessness, which, upon such an occasion, is neither more nor less than dishonesty. Curiously enough, two of the statements to which we refer are clamorously and joyously adopted, and reiterated by the reviewer in the *Times* on the 9th inst. When the army arrived at Sebastopol, "the English," says Mr. Woods, "had no theodolites with them." A negative assertion like this is rather a wide one to receive, on the authority of a single person. It is curious that Mr. Woods should have said—carried away by love of picturesqueness and alliteration—that amongst the shops established at Varna were some in which you might buy anything "from a theodolite to a toothpick." (i. 151.) Of course Mr. Woods was only looking out for something large which began with a *t*, but if we are to believe that theodolites were in such demand at Varna that private speculators brought them to the camp for sale, it is quite incredible that there should have been none at Sebastopol. This is a small matter, though characteristic, but what follows is of very different importance. We request our readers' attention to the following comparison:—

WOODS, vol. ii. p. 253.—On the 8th of January, of the 63rd Regiment, only seven remained fit for duty. On the same day the 46th, which had landed on the 8th Nov., just two months before, mustered only sixty serviceable men. The 90th, a strong and healthy regiment, buried fifty men in eleven days; and one full company, during the same time, had only seventeen men out of hospital. The three battalions of Guards were mere names. Out of 1562 men sent out to the Scots Fusiliers, from first to last, only 210 remained.

RUSSELL, p. 303. Jan. 8.—The 63rd Regiment had only seven men fit for duty yesterday. The 46th had only thirty men fit for duty at the same date. A strong company of the 90th have been reduced, by the last week's severity, to fourteen file, in a few days; and that regiment, though considered very healthy, lost fifty men by death in a fortnight. The Scots Fusilier Guards, who have had out, from beginning to end, 1562 men, now muster, including servants and corporals, 210 men on parade.

Our readers see how exactly, almost verbally, these accounts tally. The sentences are sometimes clause for clause the same, and the regiments are referred to in the same order. Mr. Russell's statement purports to be a republication of his letter of the 8th January, and we suppose it is so; but Mr. Woods's statement does not purport to be taken from Mr. Russell, but from his own observation. In referring, however, to Mr. Woods's letters, in the *Morning Herald*, dated on the 8th, the 15th, the 20th, and the 27th of January, and on the 10th of February, and published on the 29th of January, and on the 3rd, 14th, and 27th of February—in which the sufferings of the army are dwelt upon at great length—we find that there is no reference whatever to the 90th Regiment or to the Scots Fusiliers, except in so far as the latter are comprehended under the general description of the losses of the Guards. The 46th Regiment are described as having, on the 8th of January, mustered seventy, not sixty, men; and the 63rd as having been reduced, not to seven on the 7th of January,

but to ten on the 11th. The differences are unimportant in themselves; but the alteration in the case of the 63rd shows that Mr. Woods prefers Mr. Russell's authority to his own, and that which applies to the 46th shows that he will go as far to meet him as he can. The alteration must have been purposely made, for, on the 8th of January, Mr. Woods mentions the fact that the 46th had landed just two months, which Mr. Russell omits, but which is mentioned in Mr. Woods's letter to the *Morning Herald* of that date. The statements about the Fusiliers and the 90th Regiment appear to be copied straight out of Mr. Russell's work, with slight alterations—we fear, to disguise the adoption. Yet this statement was paraded by the *Times* last Wednesday week as a confirmation of its own assertions, and Mr. Woods is complimented for his "unalterable fidelity." After this, it is, perhaps, superfluous to notice that, in his letter of the 8th of January Mr. Woods put the original force of the 40th at 850, whilst in his letter of the 20th he rates it at 1100. The *Times*, which mutilates its "Own Correspondent's" despatches to suit its leading articles, must feel that Mr. Woods, who adapts his statements to Mr. Russell's, is a congenial spirit.

The most unblushing piece of impudence in Mr. Woods's book is to be found in a note in vol. ii. p. 206-7. In this passage Mr. Woods, after bitter complaints of the inefficiency of everything and everybody, gives for once an authority for his statements. "All the facts I have mentioned in this chapter," he says, "with others still more important which afterwards occurred, are detailed at length"—where does the reader suppose?—in an unpublished report in the possession of Government. Unless Mr. Woods has seen the report in question, his assertion is a simple guess, which, in such a case, is very like a simple untruth. What he says may be true or not, but he has no possible means of knowing whether it is so. He has the *naïveté* to add that the House of Commons' Report "elicited nothing to criminate any one very deeply." Surely the fact that such evidence as has been published exculpates the accused is a curious reason for saying that evidence given in a private inquiry criminate him.

Mr. Woods is, if his treatment of his own nest is any evidence, one of the least cleanly of all bipeds. Wherever he compares the English and French, it is to our disadvantage. A few phrases occur, no doubt, in which he says that it is painful and humiliating to do so, but Mr. Woods is a perfect ascetic in his passion for such humiliation. We will only notice two out of very many instances of this. In his account of the naval attack on Sebastopol, "The French fleet," he says, "was in long before the English. They came on in magnificent style, in two long lines." The English, he says, came in an hour after, and Admiral Dundas anchored with several ships about 2000 yards from the forts, "from which safe range" they kept up an incessant fire. He does not speak of the French as firing from "a safe range." Yet according to his own account, they were as far from the batteries as Admiral Dundas. Another most striking instance is the manner in which he hurries over the French expedition into the Dobrudscha. It is passed over in two or three pages, concluding with a notice of the "most searching investigation" to which the general in command was subjected, and which terminated in his acquittal. If an English general had lost one-third of his men by sickness in twelve days, no language would have been strong enough to describe his wickedness, and any investigation which stopped short of shooting or breaking all concerned would have been denounced as a delusion.

Of Mr. Woods's style we need not speak. It is familiar enough to all readers, showy, noisy, clever, and picturesque, but essentially vulgar and impudent. A dead dog is "a decayed specimen of canine mortality." He sees at sea "a phenomena," "Bosquet" and "Canrobert," "Lucan" and "Cardigan," lose their several titles. Statements of the most vehement kind are made upon any or no authority. For example, Mr. Woods was on his way from Constantinople during the great storm of the 14th November; he arrived after it was over. Yet, in his letter to the *Morning Herald*, "two or three days after the gale,"—i. e., immediately on his arrival, he says, "I most decidedly charge the whole of the deplorable results of the late gale on the gross and culpable mismanagement of the naval authorities out here."—(ii. 189). And he reprints this astonishing piece of impertinence, although he states (p. 171) that Admiral Lyons approved of the conduct of those who kept the transports out of Balaklava Harbour, either because he thought the anchorage a safe one, or because he was aware of reasons which justified the measure. We should never have done if we pointed out all the follies and impudence which disgrace this book. After all, who are Messrs. Woods and Russell? They have assumed a censorship over our affairs, which, if it were a public trust, would not be granted to any one who had not some of the very highest mental qualifications which men can possess. The sternest impartiality, judicial habits of mind, the highest personal character, are some of the qualifications which, if united with profound knowledge, might give a man a right to pronounce *ex cathedra* upon the conduct of such an undertaking. Messrs. Woods and Russell may be the most sober, the most moral, the most upright of men, inaccessible to flattery, or to those delicate attentions which are a sort of indirect bribery; but the mere fact that they represent certain London papers in the Crimea proves nothing as to their respectability or their authority. There is a class of gentlemen of their profession whose business it is to describe

processions, reviews, lord mayors' feasts, and executions; to tell how at an early hour the culprit partook of tea, and asked for broiled ham, which was supplied him; how the worthy sheriff and excellent chaplain arrived at seven; how, soon afterwards, Calcraft was in attendance; and how the procession was formed, and as the bells of a neighbouring church tolled eight, the culprit was launched into eternity. We do not deny to these gentlemen plenty of fluency, picturesque eyes, and language to match; but when we come to look at their treatment of facts, and at the effect which their statements produce, we had rather have them confine themselves to the humbler vocation of the hangman's historians, than hold up our name and nation to the contempt of all Europe.

CATCHPENNY SCIENCE.*

THE public thirsts for scientific knowledge, but our men of science are silent, or write only for their brethren; and the consequence is, that where men who are wise "fear to tread," men who are otherwise rush in with great alacrity. Catchpenny trash supplies a void which popular science might so honourably fill. In Germany, some of the most eminent men have of late years written what all can read; and in France, although popular scientific works are rare, eminent men have undertaken the task. But in England, this is seldom the case; although when a really good book is written, the English public knows how to appreciate it—as witness Arnott's *Elements of Physics*, still without a rival.

Nor does the evil rest here. A wretched compilation, made by one who never performed an experiment, and does not even know the experiments of others, is lauded by the Press, is puffd, advertised, and sold to people who cannot detect the rubbish they have bought. Men of science do not read these books, and consequently no one can warn the misguided purchaser; for the critics who laud them are, naturally enough, even more ignorant than the men who write them. We intend to keep an eye on offenders of this class, who call for literary police more loudly than most others.

The first illustration we have chosen is the *Phasis of Matter*, by Dr. Lindley Kemp, which we should certainly have left unnoticed had not other journals lauded it, one of them actually comparing it to Arnott's *Physics*. The very title is significant, for it is catchpenny and blundering. Dr. Kemp calls his book the *Phasis of Matter*, being so ignorant of the meaning of "Phasis" that he imagines it to be synonymous with changes. The *Phasis of Matter* means the *Appearance of Matter*. Had he said *Phases*, there would have been no inaccuracy. However, a man may be ignorant of Greek, and yet be a good chemist. Let us, then, look into Dr. Kemp's volumes. It is not necessary to read them, but we can dip here and there to ascertain the kind of man with whom we have to deal. Our dipping has caused us to alight on such a crop of blunders that we have had no inclination to read many consecutive pages. The blunders are not simply blunders of fact, or omissions of carelessness, but blunders which imply want of acquaintance with the elementary principles of the science, and want of that thought and care in compilation which are the compiler's sole virtues. Our first dip was at page 48 of vol. ii. If, in an edition of Cocker's *Arithmetic*, a chapter on the Differential Calculus had been introduced, a greater mistake would not have been committed than when Dr. Kemp introduces a section on Compound Radicals in a work on Chemistry intended "for the general scholar and men of the world." The theory of Radicals is only interesting to the scientific chemist; but Dr. Kemp does not know what a Radical is, and therefore he is unable to decide whether the knowledge be serviceable to men of the world or not. He finds a section on Radicals in the books from which he compiles, and what he finds there he thinks must be worth reprinting. The proof of our assertion that he does not know what a Radical is, may be seen in his description of it. "Thus," he says, "there is a substance, called ethyle, each atom of which consists of four of carbon and five of hydrogen." Did Dr. Kemp ever see this substance? did he ever smell it? or weigh it? Has he ever seen any one who has a "bowing acquaintance" with it? He has not. There is not, so far as we know, any such substance. Its existence is as hypothetical as that of the ether we assume for light, or as that of the inhabitants of Mercury. The whole doctrine of Radicals is founded on hypothetical existences. The only substance yet isolated in what is supposed to be the radical form, is cyanogen—the others are supposed to exist, because theory finds it convenient that they should exist.

On the same page, we find Dr. Kemp instructing his readers that alcohol is the production of the decomposition of sugar, and is one of the class of organic substances which defy the power of man to reconstruct them synthetically. If Dr. Kemp, in his desire to record the "Discoveries of Modern Chemistry," had taken the trouble to read what the Moderns are doing, or had asked any chemist to look over his proof sheets, he would have learned that alcohol has been synthetically reconstructed by M. Berthelot from bicarbonate of hydrogen, concentrated sulphuric acid, and water.

* The *Phasis of Matter*; being an Outline of the Discoveries and Applications of Modern Chemistry. By T. Lindley Kemp, M.D. In two volumes. London: Longmans. 1855.

In his preface, Dr. Kemp says he is not a professed chemist, but has "only attended to chemistry in common with physiology and other sciences;" and this impartiality of ignorance he considers "a positive advantage." We looked into the physiological sections of his work, hoping to find him more at his ease there; but our first dip was unfortunate, and our second still more so. "These substances—" he is speaking of saccharine proximate principles—"occur very abundantly in plants; but, with one exception, are never formed in animal structures." This exception, we afterwards learn, is sugar, which "exists in the milk of mammalia." Had he left the sentence thus, we might have attributed it to carelessness; but he is careful in error, and adds—"There is, however, an abnormal condition, called diabetes, in which another variety of sugar is produced by the vital powers of animals." If he will ask the first student of medicine he happens to meet, he will learn, 1st, that sugar is *always* found in the normal condition of animals; 2nd, that the sugar of diabetes is precisely this same sugar, only it is in excess. Probably the same student, if he be ordinarily instructed, will inform Dr. Kemp that sugar is not the only exception in the class which he says belongs exclusively to plants. *Cellulose* has long been known as a constituent of some inferior animals, i. e. in the cartilaginous envelope of the ascidians, and in the mantle of the cynthias; and within the last two years Virchow has demonstrated its presence in the brain and spinal cord of man. But these errors are nothing to what we now open upon at p. 179:—"An animal secretion is a substance separated from the blood of an animal at a gland." The meaning of which is, that the secretions exist in the blood, whereas they are formed in their special glands out of materials furnished by the blood. Even if we give Dr. Kemp the benefit of this explanation, and do not hold him to the plain meaning of his words, his blundering is so elementary that no explanation will remove it—he actually classes chyme, chyle, and blood, among the secretions! That is to say, the food which is made a pulpy mass in the stomach and the intestines, is classed with those substances which are said to be separated from the blood—nay, the blood itself is thus separated from itself!

This blood, we are told elsewhere, is, "in the arteries, of a scarlet colour, and contains oxygen, and also a greater amount of nutrient matter than the venous. In the capillaries, it parts with this oxygen and nutrient matter, and acquires carbonic acid," &c. Can he be so ignorant as not to know that, so far from arterial blood being distinguished from venous by the possession of oxygen and the absence of carbonic acid, arterial blood *always* has carbonic acid, and venous blood *always* oxygen? But this is not all. The experiments of Magnus show that arterial blood contains *absolutely more* carbonic acid, though *relatively less*, than venous blood. It is idle, however, to talk of the experiments of Magnus to one whose ignorance is rudimental.

At p. 204, taking another dip, we learn "that all organic structures are produced from a membrane which is at first only a simple cell"—a sentence which betrays the entirely superficial nature of Dr. Kemp's knowledge on even elementary questions. We presume he knows what a membrane is, and we ask him *what* is the membrane from which all animalcules, entozoa, polypes, aculephs, &c., are produced? And what is the membrane from which plants arise?

At page 43, he favours us with a bit of philosophy, all the more remarkable because it is ushered in with the remark that "it is of the last consequence that the ideas entertained upon this subject should be very exact." The reader of course supposes Dr. Kemp's ideas to be exact, and this is the specimen he affords:—

In the first place, it is necessary to bear in mind that when the elements of the soil enter into a living organism, they entirely pass out of the realm and control of ordinary inorganic chemistry. *Chemical affinity perishes and dies as completely as life does after an animal has heaved its last sigh.* The elements that exist in bodies, although the very same elements that we have hitherto considered, do not so group themselves and form such compounds as we have seen them do in the laboratory and in the rock. In their composition, in their properties, in their very physical conformation (for, notwithstanding what has been recently said, they never crystallise), the compounds formed by the different grouping of the elements in living structures are altogether peculiar to and different from inorganic compounds.

He has read this, or something like it, in various books, wherein "vital forces" are said to "control chemical affinities;" but if he understood the elements of the matter, he would know what trash he has uttered in his attempt to be exact. Does he suppose that the affinity of phosphorus for oxygen dies and disappears in the organism? Does he suppose that acids cease to have affinities for bases, or that water is composed of other gases than oxygen and hydrogen? The differences noticeable between the organism and the laboratory arise from the greater complexity of the conditions which surround all the chemical phenomena of vitality, not from the annihilation of chemical affinities. Then observe with what charming off-hand superiority he disposes of the question of albuminous crystals. "Notwithstanding what has been said," he denies that such crystals have been found. Has he ever read "what has been said" on this subject? Has he read anything on it? Does he even know what are the substances in question, and where they have been found?

At page 244 we are told, with agreeable humility—"Ten years ago, my brain knew and believed those leading principles that are so feebly expounded in this volume; but in that interval the matter of the brain has changed." It is a pity there has not

been a corresponding change in knowledge and belief; for if there had, the stationary ignorance of ten years would not have been offered to the public as the *Phasis of Matter*.

SPANISH CONQUEST IN AMERICA.*

THE resort to imagination occasionally manifest in these volumes—as in the voyage of the *Santa Flor*, and in the scene where Privy-Councillor Fonseca lectures Ovando on his future government of the Indies, in the presence of Ferdinand and Isabella—may be said to mark, in a striking manner, the nature of the story which the author has to tell. It is one from which, at every turn, he must be struggling to escape—in which, at almost every step, he has to note how trivial a mistake led to the most dire results—in which splendour, and heroism, and excitement, are to the narrator but the heralds of unutterable woe. He has constantly before his eyes, as in the case of Ojeda on the Pearl Coast and of Alvarado at Mexico, the vast mischief which may follow the employment of one bad or erring leader; while the hopes that rise around the career of more enlightened chiefs are either cut short, as with Selvagius and Ximenes, by death, or frustrated, as with Las Casas, by fatalities that might induce despair. No tragedy was ever written which presented so overwhelming a contrast between what was and what might have been. Nor did wrong prevail merely because right was unseen. The right was seen, and was forced upon the attention of power. It made itself felt and acknowledged, and was more than once on the verge of triumph—when the inscrutable decree went forth, and the toil and pain of its champions had all been spent for nought. Compare the tedium of that unknown sea where, day after day, the sun rose and there was still no land, with the weariness of ever “climbing up the climbing wave” of men’s ignorance, prejudice, and selfishness. The seamen despaired, but Las Casas never grew faint—the sailors found the land, but Las Casas could not save it. Those writers take but a shallow view of the Spanish Conquest who regard it as a magnificent success. It was, in fact, a tremendous failure—a failure, too, in which every step towards ruin was taken after warning, as if under a spell. This stern reality is stamped on every page of Mr. Helps’s book, but to our mind is nowhere more sensibly felt than in those excursions of fancy where he seems to leave it behind. So does Tennyson’s new hero dally with the lovely sea-shell. The momentary glance aside lends new terror to the ever present spectre.

To the same or a kindred source may probably be traced another peculiarity of Mr. Helps’s manner, in which the familiarity and condescension of the chronicler not seldom prevail over the dignity of the historian. He regards his events from a point of view never taken before, searching among them, not in vain, for the origin of that strange crime which is the scandal and shame of modern civilization; and the isolation of his position deepens his anxiety for sympathy, while the consciousness of right, and, we may perhaps add, of superiority, enables him to stoop for support without the hazard of humiliation. In his *asides*, as they may be termed, he seems to express a kind of humorous pity for himself, his actors, and his readers, as if the deeds recorded were merely signs of the littleness of human nature, of which every mortal has his share, but which each desires to forget. To this wide sympathy—which, as he has said elsewhere, is at once warmth and light—add the most scrupulous love of justice that ever animated an historian, and the apologetic tenor of Mr. Helps’s comments will no longer cause surprise. For him, at least, there can be no terror in the thought that “historical writers and the people they write about may some day be brought into each others’ presence.” Possibly his consideration for individuals is sometimes carried too far, and passes into an over-reluctance to condemn anybody. It is not easy to excuse the perpetrator without seeming to palliate the crime. Justify the persecutors of one age, and you facilitate persecution in another. “The historian,” says Mr. Helps, “is always an apologist.” Yet if he would preserve his warning power, he will be very cautious in allowing good intentions to plead for the errors of incapacity, or evil deeds to be excused by imperfect light. Otherwise, the ignorant and incapable will always be suffered to govern the world. We can fancy Mr. Helps adding—they are.

It must not be thought that he is insensible to the mischief. His whole work is a protest against it. The *Spanish Conquest* is written to show the evils that result, not merely from mal-administration, but from neglect in securing the best administration. It is written to show what a chance was thrown away for Spain and for the world—how the new-found Continent of the West, instead of profiting as it ought by the civilization of its discoverers, and giving them in return new life and prosperity, was made by their folly the grave of its own races and the corruptor of theirs, and finally became the great mart of that fatal traffic the first inauguration of which was, as Mr. Helps says, a thing to gladden all the hosts of hell. The rise and progress of modern slavery was in fact the phenomenon that first prompted the writer’s inquiries; and in exploring it he realized

his own idea of historical study, plunging into it with earnestness, finding it widen, and intertwine with other researches—pursuing and connecting these new developments—and so arriving at a knowledge of the myriads of men whose deeds and sufferings make up the dismal tale.

In this manner, the “Narrative of the Principal Events which led to Negro Slavery in the West Indies and America” grew into the present work. And it is a circumstance proving the author’s conscientiousness and judgment, that the portion of the earlier history incorporated in this has required scarcely any alteration. The only novelties that we have observed are the contrast between States and individuals at the opening of the second volume—an extended sketch of the Chancellor Gattinara, with a note containing a letter of Las Casas, in the same volume—and some additional particulars respecting the first use made by Pedrarias of that famous “Requisition,” the “comicality” of which, our author says, often cheered him in the midst of tedious research or endless details of small battles. The Requisition, it will be remembered, was a proclamation on the part of Ferdinand and his daughter Juana, acquainting the Indians with the title of the Pope to inherit the earth, and his donation of the New World to the King of Spain; and cautioning them that, if they did not submit to the decree, they would be attacked and made slaves. Oviedo, the historian, had charge of the proclamation under Pedrarias, and finding that it had but little chance of obtaining a hearing amidst the din of the Spanish forays, took occasion to say to the commander, in presence of his suite:—

“My Lord,—It appears to me that these Indians will not listen to the theology of this Requisition, and that you have no one who can make them understand it: would your honour be pleased to keep it until we have some one of these Indians in a cage, in order that he may learn it at his leisure, and my Lord Bishop may explain it to him?” “I gave him the Requisition (the historian adds), and he took it with much laughter, both on his part and from all those who heard me.” If our own age did not abound in things as remote from all common sense as this Requisition, we should wonder how such a folly could ever have been put forward, or even acquiesced in, by persons of such intelligence as those who surrounded the Spanish Court.

The two volumes of “The Conquerors” brought the story to that point in Las Casas’ endeavours to obtain a grant of land on the Pearl Coast, when the king’s preachers had made a vow to stigmatize the treatment of the Indians publicly in their sermons before the court. The intercession of the brave divines proved of no avail, but it may not have been without its influence in the many “currents of thought and endeavour which go to form the main volume of wise legislation.” The present work carries on the narrative of Las Casas’ untiring perseverance, describes the inadequate concession finally granted to his importunities, and narrates his return to St. Domingo, only to find his hopes blighted in the very moment of success. The Dominicans in Cumana had just been massacred by the Indians, and an expedition was then on its way to avenge their fate. The gentle natives of the Pearl Coast, upon whose characteristics Mr. Helps dwells with evident delight, with their love for the solitude of nature, their calm, hospitable villages, and their at least innocent religion—whose only fear was of the Carib islanders, and who offered the fairest opportunity of making the red and white man acquainted with each other’s virtues—had already been shown the dark side of their visitors’ character, and all hope founded on their friendship was lost. The wealth of their oyster-beds was destined to be their ruin:—

The diseases of a creature apparently occupying a low place in the scale of creation, were fated to be the means of dissolving the whole of Indian society in those parts, and of reducing large districts from a state of cultivation into a state of nature, so that it is only conjectured now by the skilful naturalist, founding his conjecture upon the prevalence of some particular flower, that they once were cultivated.

Nevertheless Las Casas persevered. Nor can we easily imagine a more heroic spectacle than that of this great man, standing alone upon the beach of his vast territory with his servants and labourers, and watching the receding ships that bore Ocampo and his escort away from the shore they had devastated. Yet he was not so entirely alone as, at the moment, he seemed. The Franciscans had returned—

And they were the sole nucleus of Christianity and civilization in that immense expanse of country, a seventh part of the whole world. . . . The light from that monastery, the sound of its bell amidst the wilderness of idolatry, what signs of hope they were—which angels might have watched with unspeakable joy, and yet with apprehension!

The last would have been the more appropriate sentiment. Las Casas felt compelled to visit Hispaniola, to obtain protection against the Spaniards who infested the island of Cubagua at a short distance from his settlement. In his absence, the Indians rose *en masse*; the Franciscans narrowly escaped with their lives; and Las Casas’ colonization was at an end. He retired to the shelter of the Dominican monastery at St. Domingo, and before long hid his grief beneath the cowl of the order. If Mr. Helps rendered his readers no other service than that of putting them in sympathy with one of the noblest characters that ever sought the good of their race from the grandest motives, his volumes would not have been written in vain.

A very different hero next enters on the scene. It was in July, 1521, that Las Casas set sail from Hispaniola to found his colony on the Pearl Coast; and at that very time, Cortes, with his Tlascalcan allies, was preparing for his first general attack upon Quatimotzin’s last stronghold in Mexico. Mr. Helps’s tenth and eleventh books contain the story of that wonderful

* *The Spanish Conquest in America, and its Relation to the History of Slavery and to the Government of Colonies.* Vols. I. and II. By Arthur Helps. London: John W. Parker and Son. 1855.

invasion which, of all the exploits of Europeans in the New World, has perhaps the most powerful attractions for the imagination. The mere clink of the Mexican names, so totally dissimilar to those of any other language, seems at once to introduce us to a novel and mysterious race; while the strangeness of their civilization and the horrors of their worship appear to be those of some Babylon of a forgotten age, rather than of a city but three hundred years ago. But the splendour of the theme does not beguile Mr. Helps from his own purpose; and in his hands, the story of the conquest of Mexico is made to yield its moral, and to contribute its lesson for the practical benefit of mankind.

While this attention to his special object has filled our author's volumes with maxims of great value in all that relates to the administration of high affairs, it in no degree detracts from the more ordinary interest of the narrative. Mr. Helps possesses the gift of making his reader personally intimate, so to speak, with his actors; and where this is accomplished, even the small doings of inferior men often become invested with a life and spirit which entrance the reader. How much more so, then, with such personages as Ferdinand and Isabella, Ximenes, Columbus and Cortes, and especially Las Casas—not to mention a host of names only second to these. How much more so when the events relate to no less than the discovery of another hemisphere, and to the fate of myriads of our own race then seen for the first time.

Nor must it be supposed that Mr. Helps's design excludes the picturesque features of the tale. Few books abound more in such attractions than the *Spanish Conquest*. The voyage of Bartholomew Diaz on the African coast is illustrated by Camoens' fine conception of the Genius of the Stormy Cape. Isabella the Queen, is portrayed as she looks down upon the beholder in a chapel of the cathedral at Granada. The mournful story of the Lucayan's raft exhibits the despair of the St. Domingo captives. Vasco Nuñez is pacing the shore of the Pacific, gazing on the brigantines which are to bear him to the conquest of Peru, on "an evening in the tropics where nature is so large and so gracious," when the messenger of Pedrarias summons him to death. To the Mexicans, the Spaniards are the children of the sun—to the Peruvians, the foam of the sea. The whole voyage of the *Santa Flor*, already referred to, is a series of animated pictures. The entire course of Cortes's wondrous progress is full of scenic pomp. Take the scene when he had succeeded, after a terrible combat, in dislodging the Mexicans from the upper platform of the great temple:—

Then might be seen, flitting about the contest, like some obscure and hideous birds of prey, the priests of the temple; with their long black veils streaming in the wind, the blood flowing from their clotted hair and lacerated ears, as on a day of sacrifice: now transported by wrath at the desecration of their shrines, now animated by the expectation of fresh victims, and, throughout, supported in their ecstasy by the hope of some great manifestation on the part of their false deities.

The passage which follows this affords one slight sample of another quality which Mr. Helps possesses in a high degree, and which continually enlivens his practical deductions—we mean his humour:—

The Mexican God of War could not, even at this critical period of his and their existence, instruct his worshippers how to hurl down, at the right inclination, the large beams which they had carried up to the temple, and which, if justly aimed, would have fatally disconcerted the Spanish attack.

We had noted many instances of this characteristic of the author's style, but must be content to leave them uncited here. We cannot, however, close our remarks without expressing our gratitude for the maps which illustrate the work, and the repetition of which in the letter-press is a signal boon to the reader.

THE SHAVING OF SHAGPAT.*

LITTLE did we imagine that a work of genius was announced under the incomprehensible title which has, for many weeks past, met our eye among the advertisements of new books. The *Shaving of Shagpat*! what could it mean? "An Arabian Entertainment!" what might that be? It is very seldom that an announcement which piques curiosity is followed by a work which satisfies the curiosity; but in the *Shaving of Shagpat* a quaint title ushers in an original and charming book, the work of a poet and of a storyteller worthy to rank with the rare storytellers of the East, who have produced, in the *Arabian Nights*, the *Iliad* of romance.

The *Shaving of Shagpat* is an imitation of the Oriental stories; not by any means a servile imitation, but the sort of imitation which naturally springs from kindred power. It is more Eastern than Goethe's *West-östliche Divan*, less directly imitative than Rückert's Oriental poems. Mr. Meredith has thoroughly caught the spirit of Arabian romance, and pleasantly tinges his style with the colour and imagery of Arabian eloquence. But, although his inventions are as oriental as "Sindbad" or "Ali-Baba," he assures us in the Preface that they are inventions of his own, and not derived from Eastern sources. It needs such an assertion to convince the reader that he is not listening to the veritable fictions of the East. Both the humour and the poetry seem to issue from the same abundant and delightful source that gave us

the *Arabian Nights*; and to produce such a work, which shall not be a rifacimento, but which shall read like an original, requires very peculiar powers in the writer. Nothing would be easier than to write a tale of enchantment after the Arabian model; but only to rare minds is it given to write a tale which shall increase the treasures of fiction, while strictly adhering to the old forms.

The *Shaving of Shagpat* is a collection of stories, connected together by the tale which gives its title to the book. Shibli Bagarag, the Persian Barber, has had great things predicted of him by the readers of planets. These predictions unsettle him, and send him wandering in quest of greatness. He is to become Master of the Event, and to live in the memories of men. That Event is nothing less than the shaving of Shagpat, the clothier who gives his name to the city of Shagpat, and who, arrogant in hairiness, is much revered by men. To shave a clothier, he never so hairy, will not seem a difficult task, nor the event a great Event. But, O rash reader! the task is more perilous than it seems to thee—the Event more portentous. Hair has become sacred in the cities of Shagpat and Oolb: and barbers an abomination. Thwacks, not sequins, await Figaro. Poor Shibli Bagarag, in the innocence and pride of his art, offers to shave the King, and his reward is fifty thwacks; and "'tis certain, that at every thwack, the thong took an airing before it descended upon him." Nevertheless, thwacked and reviled though he be, Shibli Bagarag loses not heart. His mind is fixed on becoming Master of the Event. Shave the hairy Shagpat he will; and shave him he does. But *how* he does it, by what magic, through what perilous enterprises, baffling malignant genii with potent spells, now nearly losing the prize just as it is within his grasp, and now by timely aid recovering himself—these, and all the marvellous stories which he hears the while—must be sought in the volume itself. We will not blunt the edge of curiosity by even hinting what we know. If any reader, from the age of ten to the age of eighty, resists the fascination of the stories, it is a proof that he has no imagination.

Although written in prose, liberally sprinkled with verses, after the Eastern manner, the work is a poem throughout. In every page we are aware of the poet. Not that he gives us that detestable hybrid vulgarly called "poetical prose," with its dissonances of fragmentary metre, and its fine writing which noodles call "beautiful language." The prose is prose—not broken-up verse; the language is simple, picturesque, pregnant—not ornate inanities addressed to the ear. A random specimen or two will show what we mean:—

O my father, there is all in this youth, the nephew of the barber, that's desirable for the undertaking; and his feet will be on a level with the task we propose for him—he is the height of man above it.

Again:—

Thereupon he exulted, and his mind strutted through the future of his days, and down the ladder of all time, exacting homage from men, his brethren.

Again:—

At the hour indicated, Khopil stood before Shahpesh again. He was pale, saddened; his tongue drooped like the tongue of a heavy bell, that when it soundeth giveth forth mournful sounds only: he had also the look of one battered with many beatings.

These are characteristic specimens—not the best that could have been quoted, but the fairest representatives of the whole. The imagery is brief—generally conveyed in half a sentence—as where the shell closes on the lovers, "writing darkness on their very eyeballs;" or where the astonishment of the Vizier is expressed thus, "He made a point of his eyebrows;" and the sun is said "to shoot a current of gold over leagues of sea."

The style, although Oriental in its figurativeness, is European in its concision; we miss the luxuriant redundancy of Oriental expression, and are grateful for its absence. In revising the work for another edition, Mr. Meredith will do well to look with a little more severity on certain expressions, and get rid of such verbs as "to verse," "to lute," and "to bosom," which are not English, and are not needed. While suggesting alterations, we would further suggest another trifle, which is that he substitute *lion* for *panther* in the passage where Ruark falls upon his foes and smites them to the earth. Any Arab would tell Mr. Meredith that the panther, terrible as it is in force and ferocity when in a death-struggle, is timorous as a cat, and never attacks men except in self-defence. To compare the onslaught of a warrior to that of a panther springing on a troop of men, is therefore a false image.

These are very small faults, yet they are all we have espied in a book the charm of which has surpassed that of any Eastern work we ever read since the *Arabian Tales*; and George Meredith, hitherto known to us as a writer of graceful, but not very remarkable verse, now becomes the name of a man of genius—of one who can create.

HUMBOLDT'S KLEINE SCHRIFTEN.*

IT is not often that a life both full and long is granted to man; but there are some bright exceptions to the general rule, and amongst the most brilliant of these is Alexander von Humboldt. *Ohne Hast, ohne Rast*, seems to have been his guiding motto;

* *The Shaving of Shagpat: an Arabian Entertainment*. By George Meredith. London: Chapman and Hall. 1855.

* *Kleine Schriften*. Von Alexander von Humboldt. Erster Band. Geognostische und physikalische Erinnerungen. Stuttgart und Tübingen: J. B. Cotta'scher Verlag.

and to it he has adhered through every period of his life. Of his unflagging, patient, and earnest industry we have an example in the edition of his smaller works on which he is at present engaged, and of which the first volume appeared in the year 1853. It is dedicated to "the greatest geologist of the present day, the most acute observer of nature," Leopold von Buch, "in memory of a sixty years' untroubled friendship." How touching are these words! Few and simple though they be, what a noble picture do they call up! Most fitting, too, is it thus to dedicate to his friend an edition of works containing much that must have frequently taken the venerable author's mind back to the bygone days in which he and Leopold von Buch had often taken pleasant counsel together respecting the subjects of which these Essays treat. *Ohne Hast, ohne Rast*, they both pursued their path during those fruitful sixty years, and it is but a little while ago that one of them was called to rest from his labours. Loved and revered be his memory by us, as by his still surviving friend.

Baron Humboldt's object in publishing this collection of his works has been to prevent others from undertaking a compilation in which papers might appear which, in the present state of science, would be of little or of only partial value. His choice has principally fallen on such essays and lectures as are scattered throughout periodical works, or have been published in costly and not easily accessible volumes; and in cases where fresh light has since been thrown on the subjects treated of, he has mentioned the fact in the addenda. Half of the present volume contains papers on the Geography of the Cordilleras of South America, and an account of two attempts to ascend Chimborazo, which, together with the recital of an expedition to the crater of the volcano of Pinchincha, we recommend to the notice of all intending tourists who are *blasés* of Mont Blanc and *ennuyés* of Vesuvius. There are also three short treatises, one on Isothermal Lines, another on the Constitution of our Atmosphere, and a third on the Greater Intensity of Sound by Night, of which, as being a very interesting paper in itself, and on a subject which may be new to some of our readers, we propose to give an abstract.

The phenomenon of the greater intensity of sound during the night did not escape the notice of Aristotle, and it is also alluded to by Plato in his *Dialogues*. We are speaking, be it remembered, not of that increase which is occasioned by a change of wind and modified by the relation that subsists between the direction of the wind and that of the waves of sound, but the increase which takes place when the night is calm and bright. Humboldt observed that, when he was travelling in the tropics, it seemed to him to be greater in the plains than on the summit of the Andes, at a height of 9000 or 12,000 feet above the level of the sea—greater also in the interior of continents and in low-lying situations than at sea. These estimates were founded upon his observations of the sounds proceeding from two volcanoes, those of Guacamayo and Cotopaxi, which he had an opportunity of hearing by day and by night.

If any one were to listen to the roar of the great cataract of the Orinoco, in the plains that surround the Mission Atures, from a distance of more than four miles, he might fancy himself to be near a heavy surge, breaking upon a rocky shore. He would find, moreover, that the sound is three times as loud during the night, and that it gives an inexpressible and mysterious charm to those lonely and desert solitudes, where there is nothing else to interrupt the everlasting silence of Nature. It might, however, be imagined that even in places uninhabited by man, the buzzing of insects, the song of birds, the rustling of leaves moved by the wind, would cause a humming murmur which would, perhaps, be scarcely perceived by day on account of its uniformity, and because of the ear becoming accustomed to it. Such a sound, although it might thus be little noticed, would, in the day-time, lessen the intensity of a louder sound; and this diminution would cease, if, during the stillness of the night, the buzzing of insects, the song of birds, and the rustling of leaves were no longer heard. But this is not the case in the woods of the Orinoco, where the air is constantly filled with clouds of mosquitoes, while the hum of insects is louder by night than by day, and the wind only sets in after sunset. The velocity of the propagation of sound is lessened rather than increased by the lowering of the temperature, and its intensity is diminished in an atmosphere which has been set in motion by a wind the direction of which is opposed to that of the waves of sound. It is also diminished by the rarefaction of the air, and is weaker in the higher regions of the atmosphere than in the lower, in which the molecules of disturbed air are more dense, and have less elasticity with the same radius. The intensity is the same in moist and dry air, but it is weaker in carbonic acid gas than in a mixture of oxygen and nitrogen.

Having mentioned these facts, Baron Humboldt states that he considers it probable that it is the presence of the sun which influences the intensity of sound, by means of the hindrance which the propagation of the waves meets with from ascending currents of air of different densities, and the partial oscillations of the atmosphere caused by the unequal warming of different portions of the earth's surface. During the night the ground is cooled, the portions covered with sand or grass assume a uniform temperature, and the atmosphere is no longer intersected by little currents of warmer air which rise perpendicularly or obliquely in all directions by day, dividing the waves of sound and making them rebound upon themselves. In the more

uniform medium which is maintained during night, the waves are propagated with less difficulty, and therefore the intensity of sound increases—the dividing of the waves, and the partial echoes consequent upon their rebound, less frequently taking place. If this cause be the true one, it is not matter for surprise that in the tropical zone the increase in the intensity of sound by night is greater in the interior of the land than at sea, and greater in the plains than on the mountains of the Cordilleras. The surface of the equatorial seas is uniform, and rarely rises above 84° of temperature, whereas the surface of the continent, varying in its conformation, and consisting of substances that reflect heat in different degrees, has a temperature varying from 86° to 126°. In the tropics, also, the earth is generally warmer during the night than the air. In the temperate zones, on the contrary, the ground, on clear and calm nights, is often 7° or 9° colder than the air; and the temperature, instead of lessening in proportion to the height from the ground, increases, in Europe, up to a height of fifty or sixty feet. It is no wonder, therefore, that the refraction of sound is sometimes almost as considerable by night as by day in these regions. Here, strata of air of different densities are constantly resting on each other, but the small currents of warmer air which ascend through the atmosphere in an oblique direction are rarer by night than by day. At the height of 9000 feet, those parts of the Andes lying under the equator have a medium temperature of only 57°, and the amount of radiation in a dry and cloudless night prevents the ground from becoming very much heated during the day. There is no occasion, however, to dwell longer on these local circumstances—it is enough to have deduced, in general terms, the cause of the increase of sound during the night from the theory of the waves not coming so much in contact with currents of different densities as they do by day. Moreover, the mountaineers of the Alps, like those of the Andes, look upon an extraordinary increase in the intensity of sound heard on a quiet night as a sure sign of change of weather. "It will rain," they say, "for we hear the torrent more clearly." They also predict a change of weather when distant snow-covered mountains suddenly seem near at hand, with their outlines clear out against the sky. Whatever, therefore, may be the state of the atmosphere which causes these phenomena, we may, at any rate, perceive in these instances an analogy between the propagation of the waves of sound and that of light.

In the notes added in 1853 to this Essay, Baron Humboldt observes that the weaker intensity of sound upon the sea cannot, as upon the continent, be caused by local differences in the warmth of the surface, which he has found to preserve very much the same temperature over a space of several hundred miles in the temperate zones; and he therefore believes that it is only to be ascribed to the want of elasticity in the fluid surface. The influence of woollen draperies in a concert-room, and the deadening in the report of a cannon let off at the edge of a cornfield in full ear, present striking analogies to the diminution in the loudness of sounds occurring on the sea. Thus, also, when the intensity of sound is lessened during a snow-storm, he considers it to be owing to an interruption in the propagation of the waves of sound, caused by their coming in contact with the different densities which they meet with in their passage through the snow-laden medium. If, however, the weakening of the sound which takes place after a fall is only perceived, according to Derham, so long as the snow is not covered with a coating of glittering ice, it is an instance of the resonance of the surface of the ground.

In connexion with this subject, it may be mentioned that Saussure and others who have made the ascent of Mont Blanc observed that, very early in their journey up the mountain, the sound of their voices seemed to become weakened in an extraordinary degree; whilst Humboldt, on the occasion of Bonpland, Montufar and himself visiting the volcanoes of Popayan, Quito, Peru, and Mexico, did not remark anything of the kind, although they often ascended to heights towering far above the summit of Mont Blanc. On the contrary, they heard each other speak with as much ease as if they had been at the level of the sea; but then, he remarks, "we had previously been spending many months on heights varying from 7000 to 9000 feet." He therefore considers that Bravais may be right in thinking that the quickness with which the ascent of Mont Blanc is made affects the organ of hearing, and that it is not the intensity of sound which is weakened.

For the first really useful and trustworthy results, founded on numerical data, as to the intensity of sound, we have to thank Messrs. Martin and Bravais. As a note struck by a tuning-fork would always preserve the same intensity in an aerial medium of uniform density, the difference of the distance at which we cease to hear it on account of the unequal density of the air would give an accurate measure of its intensity. In a plain near the village of St. Chéron (Dep. de Seine et Oise) the note struck by the tuning-fork (performing 512 vibrations in a second) ceased to be heard at a distance of 833 feet. The state of the atmosphere at the time was calm, and scarcely disturbed by a gentle south wind which, however, cut at right angles the line that separated the listener from the instrument. The sky was cloudy, the temperature (half-past one o'clock, p.m., 22nd June, 1844) 75°, the barometer 29.3. The experiment was repeated at midnight, and although the stillness was more broken than

than it had been even during the day by the hum of insects, the fall of small twigs, and the barking of dogs. Mr. Martin was able to perceive the sound 410 feet further off. It was only when the observers had retreated to a distance of 1243 feet that they ceased to hear it (ther. 62°, bar. 29.31.)

We heartily recommend these *Kleine Schriften* to general notice. We may add that this Essay is followed by one on the Medium Heights of the Continents of Europe, America, and Asia; and lastly, we have a comparison of the different rates of temperature at the places or stations marked on the tables at the end of the volume. We need scarcely say that the whole book is full of interesting and valuable matter, as everything indeed must be which comes from such a source.

LORD PLUNKET'S APOLOGIST.*

WE have not done with the Irish "Baron Bishop." His double Lordship, to do him simple justice, has taken the prudent course. He has suffered judgment to go by default. He has not moved to arrest that verdict which literary society has, as his Lordship may happen to have heard, expressed with significant emphasis on his recent Charge. He has contented himself with valour's safest moiety; and, as the Scotch say, he lets the flea stick to the wall. Not so his Lordship's travelling companion, a Hampshire rector, a Mr. Dallas of Wonston, who "feels himself called upon to inform us of the simple facts, in order that our readers may have an opportunity of judging fairly on the merits of the case."

Let it be as the Rev. Alexander H. C. Dallas pleases. The credit of the Bishop of Tuam is not in our keeping, and his friend must take the responsibility of the further progress of the matter. He wishes to make a clean breast of it to the readers of the *Saturday Review*, "as"—so he periphrastically expresses it—"he happens accidentally to have been in some measure concerned in the publication of the Charge alluded to" in our article of the 5th of January. He claims that we should furnish him with the opportunity of giving to the whole world the secret history of that notable act of publication. We accede; not because we choose to set a precedent for admitting correspondence in our pages, but merely to complete the monograph of this literary phenomenon. We omit the head and tail of Mr. Dallas's communication, which consist of some unctuous homiletics on Christian charity and so on, because, with Mr. Dallas's views of the elements of morality, which it is quite plain he has yet to learn, we do not think that he is in a position to lecture us on the evils of sarcasm or on our lack of any Christian virtue. Time enough for Mr. Dallas's lectures on style and spirit when he and his episcopal friend have acquired a practical acquaintance with common honesty.

Here are the simple facts—very simple, indeed—in Mr. Dallas's own narrative:

In August, 1855, I was travelling with the Bishop of Tuam in the west of Ireland. The Charge he had delivered a year before to the clergy of his smaller dioceses became the subject of conversation. He had at the time been urged by those clergy to print the Charge, and this urgent request had recently been repeated. His lordship allowed me to read the manuscript, and I felt strongly that it would be of great benefit to the more numerous clergy of the larger diocese of Tuam, who were not included in the former visitation, that it should be placed before them with episcopal authority. I confess that I did not recollect the important Charge from which it now appears it had been taken, and that the difficulty which has arisen did not occur to me. Not having this in my mind, I spoke very earnestly as to the advantage that would result from the course I advised, and which the Bishop consented to adopt. I have subsequently learned from Lord Plunket himself that he was at the time entirely ignorant from what source the Charge was taken. The visitations in Ireland are not always conducted in the same manner as is usual in England. The Bishops do not invariably deliver Charges. Those who always deliver Charges are the fewer number. Upon the occasion of the visitation of Killala and Achonry, in 1854, a clergyman, officially connected with one of the dioceses, placed in the Bishop's hands a manuscript Charge as one suitable to the occasion, which his lordship supposed to be his own composition. It struck the Bishop as expressing so forcibly his own views and feelings with reference to the state of affairs at that time, that he willingly adopted the Charge, having no idea that it had at any time been published. The compiler of the Charge having, after the publication, admitted for the first time the fact of its original authorship, the publication was immediately suppressed, and an apology offered to the real author of the Charge, by whom Lord Plunket's explanation was most kindly received.

This is quite a new view of episcopal government. Certainly they manage these things across the Channel in a primitive style. Ireland for the Irish. As Mr. Dallas remarks, "The visitations in Ireland are not always conducted in the same manner as is usual in England." Not exactly. It is certainly not customary for English bishops to "visit" their dioceses with empty brains and an empty writing-case, dependent on the eleemosynary aid of "clergymen officially connected with the diocese." Think of the Bishop of Oxford or the Bishop of Manchester ruefully muttering *dote concionem episcopo*; and trusting to the chance mercies of a charge being slipped into his hands by some charitable Samaritan of the working clergy. Mr. Dallas is not quite so explicit here as he might have been. We get to the important fact of "the Charge being placed in the Bishop's hands;" but we are not informed whether it was ordered by the Bishop, or got up by the "officially connected clergyman" on spec. If

the latter, we can picture Lord Plunket's thrill of delight at the unexpected godsend. Huntington, we believe, received a pair of breeches, and Lackington was favoured with a leg of mutton—so they tell us—by some special interposition; but since the days of Mahomet, who received his revelations by angelic hands, never was a teacher so signally befriended as Lord Plunket must have felt himself when the manuscript Charge was placed in the right honourable and right reverend hands—assuming that his Lordship had not ordered the goods in question.

The charge so mysteriously received is delivered. We decline to comment on the moral state of the man, and that man a bishop, who in the most solemn discharge of the highest authority in the church, had the conscience and face, in the presence of his assembled clergy, to play this disreputable farce—to address to them words, not one syllable of which he had verified, and into the authority of which he had never inquired—to give as his own convictions the ready-made assertions of another—to deliver as his own reflections the results of another's labour—to act the hypocrisy of learned research and theological conviction—to utter as the words of his own mouth, and the meditations of his own heart, sentence after sentence which he well knew were not one single syllable of them his own. Dismissing this very simple and obvious consideration, we cannot, as to the delivery of the Charge, attach any graver imputation to the Bishop of Tuam, than incredible folly, and a petty piece of unbecoming histrionics. It is a much worse affair than for a clergyman to preach somebody else's sermon, because, as Mr. Dallas observes, an Irish episcopal charge is an exceptional performance; and because, as under the circumstances, Lord Plunket had nothing to say, silence would have best become him; and also because, we must add, the Bishop's high station binds him to the severest rules of decency.

Had the matter ended here, we should only have attached the imputation of folly to Lord Plunket. It is not the delivery merely, but the publication, of the Charge, which fixes the indelible stain on his Lordship. Of course we can understand how it was that it came to be published. The Bishop could not resist the winning solicitations of Mr. Dallas, and the applause of two dioceses. Flattered by the approval of his travelling companion, and conscious of the sweets of successful, if surreptitious authorship, he could not resist the blandishments of print. And here we have the question to put to Lord Plunket and his apologist. How came he to write on his title-page those serious words—"By the Right Hon. and Right Rev. Thomas, Lord Plunket, D.D., Bishop of Tuam, Killala, and Achonry"? The Charge, we see, says something about "the subtle wiles of that adversary of souls," &c. Do Lord Plunket and Mr. Dallas remember some words somewhere about "Satan filling" somebody's "heart" to do something which is more fully detailed in the Acts of the Apostles? And will his Lordship and his friend favour us with a distinction between the act of the man who said that certain land was sold at one price, when, in point of fact, it was sold at another, and the act of the man who on his title-page claims the authorship of fifteen pages of which he well knew that he had never written one single line? When Mr. Dallas has shown us that Lord Plunket's publication—we do not say delivery—of the Charge is, as a moral action, one whit better than that of Ananias, we will permit him to sermonize about the sarcasm and uncharitableness of the *Saturday Review*. We admit that we handled Lord Plunket with severity; and we add that as often as he or any other man, be he Bishop, Priest, or Peer, laic or cleric, claims in print to be the author of what he never wrote, we shall treat him as the impostor which he is, and with that language which alone is capable of exposing fraud and dishonesty. Whenever a man consciously puts his name to a notorious untruth—and this is "the simple fact" of Lord Plunket's case—we shall denounce it, and in such words as alone suit the offence.

Let Mr. Dallas make the case his own. Suppose that he finds under a Wonston hedge, or receives anonymously by the post, or has thrust into his hands by a pious parishioner a manuscript, full, we will say, of the most edifying and persuasive divinity and touching morality, he might be perfectly justified in getting up a private press and scattering it broadcast over the irreligious fallows of Hampshire as "Wonston Tracts, No. 199;" but would he feel himself also authorized to print on the cover, "The Sinner Saved. By Alex. R. C. Dallas?" Because these are precisely "the simple facts" of the case which the Bishop of Tuam's travelling companion brings before the world. Well may Lord Tuam complain of his injudicious bottle-holder.

But there is another aggrieved party. The clergy of the dioceses of Killala and Achonry are gravely implicated by Mr. Dallas. He all but points out the first offender. Who is the "compiler of the charge," so Mr. Dallas euphemistically expresses it ("compilo, to rob, spoil, plunder, pillage," as the Latin dictionary has it)? "A clergyman officially connected with the dioceses of Killala and Achonry." Who is the traitor? The incumbents of the two dioceses, as the Irish clergy list assures us, are only twenty-six, or rather only twenty-four, for two of them hold livings in either diocese. Those "officially connected with the dioceses," so the same authority reminds us, are, of Killala—Dean Collins, Archdeacon Leahy, Precentor Jackson. Prebendaries Stock, St. George, Bermingham, Verschoyle, Sen. Rural Deans, Messrs. Wood and Verschoyle, Jun. Surrogates, Messrs. Fames,

* A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the United Dioceses of Killala and Achonry, at the Annual Visitation, 29th September, 1854. By the Right Hon. and Right Rev. Thomas, Lord Plunket, D.D., Bishop of Tuam, Killala, and Achonry. Dublin: Samuel B. Oldham. 1855.

Moore, and Gore; and of Achonry, not also officially connected with Killala, we find in addition Lord Mountmorres, Messrs. Powell, Guinness, Thomas, and Huston. Each one of these gentlemen has a right to be relieved from the imputation which Mr. Dallas, "on his own responsibility," and "without conferring with the Bishop," so he assures us, has fastened upon them. For their own sakes they are bound to purge themselves from the fraud committed by "the compiler."

And here we leave the Bishop and his clergy, and the Bishop's defender. Mr. Dallas rebukes "our bitter sarcasm against one who is steadily pursuing the path of duty in promoting the spiritual enlightenment of the people committed to his care"—a duty to the consistent discharge of which we commend Lord Plunket, only hoping, that when he next illuminates his flock, he will not steal the candles, and that in his zealous solicitude for the souls of others, he will not forget his own. Yet, after all, perhaps his Lordship's best apology—not offered by Mr. Dallas—is contained in an epigram, flitting about the clubs, with which we take leave of this last Irish Appropriation Act. Its wit and admirable Latinity will excuse our tediousness.

CANTUARIESIS.

"Privatam monitus relinque chartam,
Mecumque, improbe, pone concionem:
Que scripsi mea sunt."

TUAMENSIS.

"Tuam requiris?
Frustra gloriæ hoc Episcopatu,
Tuam nil liceat MEAM vocare."

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